THEATRICAL and CIRCUS LIFE

Secrets of the Stage, Green-Room & Saw-Dust Arena

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M'LLE GENEVIEVE.

THEATRICAL

AND

CIRCUS LIFE;

OR,

SECRETS OF THE STAGE,

GREEN-ROOM AND SAWDUST ARENA

EMBRACING

A HISTORY OF THE THEATRE FROM SHAKESPEARE'S TIME TO THE PRESENT DAY, AND ABOUNDING IN ANECDOTES CONCERNING THE MOST PROMINENT ACTORS AND ACTRESSES BEFORE THE PUBLIC, ALSO, A COMPLETE EXPOSITION OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE STAGE, SHOWING THE MANNER IN WHICH WONDERFUL SCENIC AND OTHER EFFECTS ARE PRODUCED; THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF NEGRO MINSTRELSY; THE MOST ASTONISHING TRICKS OF MODERN MAGICIANS, AND A HISTORY OF THE HIPPODROME, ETC., ETC.

By JOHN J. JENNINGS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH 175 ENGRAVINGS.

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PROLOGUE.

The theatre and the circus, both sources of unlimited amusement to the world, are also objects of the greatest interest to all who have had even a single peep at the stage or pressed their feet even once upon the sawdust precincts of the tented show. The tricks and illusions that are mystifying to nine-tenths of those to whom they are presented rarely fail to be productive of pleasure, and the performers, whether before the foot-lights or within the circus ring, generally succeed in so thoroughly winning the hearts of the public, that, though their faces, when the paint is off and the atmosphere of glory has departed, might not be recognized upon the street, their names are so fixedly identified with the pleasant moments associated with their art, that they become household words, and are spoken, with admiration and praise, by all classes, from the newsboy and bootblack up through the various strata of society even to the ruler of the nation.

In presenting this volume to the public the intention has been to bring the player and the people into closer relations, and by revealing the secrets of the stage and sawdust arena to show that what appears at first to be deep mystery and to many, who are bigoted and averse to theatrical and kindred entertainments, the blackest diabolism, is merely the result of the simplest combinations of mechanical skill and studied art, and is as innocent of the sinister character bestowed upon it as are the efforts of school children at their annual exhibitions or the exercises of a Sabbath School class before a row of drowsy and nodding church-deacons. Fault may be found with the private lives

of numbers of the members of the theatrical and circus profession, but the sins and shortcomings of individuals, can be visited upon the entire class with no more justice than can the frailties of a few preachers be applied generally to the pulpit, or the dishonesty of a handful of lawyers be reflected upon all the disciples of Blackstone in existence. Neither is it just to class as theatres places of resort that do not deserve the name — the "dives" and "dens" that are frequented by disreputable men and women whose low tastes are catered to by men and women every bit as disreputable as their patrons. Such establishments receive, in this volume, only the severe treatment they fully merit.

In explaining the mysteries of stage representations, and indicating the tricks of ring performances, as well as in speaking of the private lives of performers and giving biographies of the most noted actors and actresses now before the public, an attempt has been made to be perfectly accurate in every detail. The anecdotal portion of the book has likewise received careful attention, and indeed every feature of the work has been given due consideration, in the hope that in and out of the profession, THEATRICAL AND CIRCUS LIFE may meet with a favorable reception and be regarded as worthy the subjects of which it treats. Commending it to the kindness of all into whose hands it falls; and assuring the inhabitants of the mimic and real worlds, that, whatever construction may be placed upon his sentences, naught but respect and affection is felt for the true and good men and women of the stage, the author parts from his volume regretting that it is not large enough to give everybody a place in its pages, or to say as much about each individual as each deserves.

J. J. J.

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CHAPTER I.

A PRELIMINARY PEEP.

Anybody can get into the auditorium of a theatre by paying an admission fee reaching from twenty-five cents up to $1.50, and the sawdust precincts of the circus may be penetrated for the modest sum of fifty cents; but behind the curtain of the theatre and beyond the screened door through which circus attractions enter the exhibition arena, are sacred places, with secrets that are so valuable to their owners that they dare not for less than a small fortune allow the public to view or even to understand them. A general knowledge of the simplicity of theatrical and circus tricks — of the delusions that make up the stock in trade of showmen generally — would destroy their value as salable articles, and make everybody a little Barnum or Jack Haverly of his own, with ability to furnish himself with amusement at home, while the former mastodonic managers could only look on and weep at the educational facilities with which the country was overrun, and mourn the Shakespearian days when people were easily pleased with the poverty-ridden stage and bare representations that were offered them. But there is no fear that the public will ever be instructed up to such a high degree in regard to the inside workings of the theatre and circus, that there will not at all times be plenty of patrons for both these excellent forms of entertainment. The managers take good care

to keep their secrets to themselves, as those who go prying around the shrines in which the theatric arcana are held, very soon find out. At the back door of every theatre — the entrance to the stage — is a cerberus of the most pronounced kind, who would sooner bite his own grandfather's ear off than allow anybody not entitled to the privilege, to pass him; while at the door of the circus dressing-room and all around it are faithful sentinels who will listen to no password, and through whose ranks it is as impossible to break as it is for the fat boy in the side show to throw a double somersault over seventeen horses, with an elephant as big as Jumbo at the far end of the line. It will, however, be the proud privilege of the readers of this book to get as close to the secrets of the stage and sawdust arena as one can well do without knowing absolutely all about them, and by the time the last page is read and the volume is ready to be closed, I think the readers will be both delighted and astonished with the revelations that have been made.

Turn the average man loose on the stage of a theatre at night, while a play is going on, and it is a Russian kobol against a whole San Juan mining district that he will not know whether he has struck the seventh circle of heaven or is in a lunatic asylum. He will meet some very queer creatures in the scenes; he will see many strange things; the brilliant lights around him, the patches of color flashing into his eyes, the sea of faces and the tangle of millinery in the auditorium, will mystify him; the startling streaks of black upon the faces of the men and women who jostle him as he closely hugs the wings, their red noses and blooming cheeks, the general tomato-can aspect of their faces, the shaggy wigs and straggling beards that look as if they had been torn off the back of a goat only ten

minutes before; the dismal, commonplace clothes that shine so radiantly when seen from a chair in the parquette or dress circle,— all these things will set his poor brain in a whirl; and while he is looking on awe-stricken, the scene shifters will come rushing down upon him with a new delusion, trampling on his toes in a manner that suggests in a most potential way his superfluity in that particular place, and pushing him aside without the merest apology, and perhaps with no other remark than a fragment of fervent profanity, as if he were a wretched street Arab in that mimic world in which the scene shifter and the captain of the "supers" play such very important parts. People come out of every imaginable place all around him. There seem to be doors everywhere, — in the walls, the floor, the ceiling, and even in space; and as the "vasty deep" and the rest of the surroundings give up their dwellers, the intruder receives fresh jolts and thrusts, and possibly additional donations of profanity. This, of course, applies only to the male apparitions that overwhelm the strange visitor to the new world behind the scenes. The female portion of that illusory sphere have nothing to say to him except with their eyes, which very forcibly inquire the meaning of his presence there.

If a person would like to understand how awfully strange and lonely it will be for the last individual left alive upon earth, he need only pay a first visit to the stage of a theatre where he is not acquainted with any of the actors or actresses, and has not even the pleasure of knowing one of the minor attaches. Any attempt to form an acquaintance is promptly and unmistakably repelled, and all the poor unfortunate has to do is to move up where he is out of everybody's way, and he can look on and wonder to his heart's content. As he inspects his surroundings and has his attention called

to the actions of the people whose business it is to place the stage in shape for an act or scene of a play, he will readily comprehend the meaning of forming a world out of chaos. If they are getting ready the

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balcony scene for "Romeo and Juliet," wing pieces are pushed out to represent trees and the side of the house of the Capulets — and what a house it usually is, too,

for such elegant people! The front of the house is rapidly placed in position between two wings, the balcony is quickly nailed on, and with the aid of a rude scaffolding behind the scene and a ladder, the fair Juliet mounts, and, feeling her way carefully, at last steps out upon the frail structure to tell the sweet moon her love for Romeo. The whole thing looks ridiculous. Even the stately daughter of the Capulets has not beauty or skill enough to remove the absurdity from the scene which has the appearance of being, and is in reality nothing else than wood and canvas freely splashed with paint of the proper colors. A painted box represents a stone; a green carpet passes for grass; the beautiful bric-a-brac that opens the eyes of the æsthetic people in the audience is only brown paper hurriedly daubed by the scene painter's apprentice; the wall of the Capulets' garden is a very frail canvas concern, and the floral attributes are frauds of the deepest dye from the scenic artist's long table of colors. The whole picture is simple, but unintelligible to the looker-on for the first time, and as he vanishes through the door he laughs heartily at the very thin disguise tragedy and comedy are required to put on to delude and please the public.

Let him return to the theatre in the morning and view its mysteries shorn of the dazzle and splendor that the night brings. He will be more astonished still. The place is usually as dark as a dungeon, there being something peculiar in the construction of theatres which makes them bright at night and dismal during daylight. If a stray slant of light falls anywhere upon the stage it will be rudely mocked by the bits of burning candle by the aid of which the stage carpenter is at work right in the very spot where, twelve hours before, Romeo and Juliet lived and died for each other in such a lamentably pathetic way that

the audience shed tears, and only gave the lachrymal rainstorm a rest at intervals long enough to shower the star with applause. The stage carpenter's assistant is there too, the machinist, the scene painters, the men who have charge of the company's baggage, the property man, and others. They fill the scene in a lugubrious and wholly uninteresting way, — all are at work, and as heedless of the attendance of strangers as the actors and stage hands of the night before had been. The scenes have lost their color — such as are left, and this mimic world that had its admiring and aspiring hundreds is as bare and desert-like as a bald head after its owner has been using hair restoratives for about six months. It has neither shape nor any suggestion of its whilom beauty and attractiveness. The green-room may be explored, and the dressing-rooms, but they will reveal nothing; their former occupants are probably still abed, and unless there is to be a rehearsal they will not be seen around again until 7 o'clock at night. He must not be too searching in his explorations or the attention of the attaches will be attracted, and the conversation that will follow may not be the most pleasant in the world to him. Moving down the stairs that lead to the space under the stage, the explorer will find it darker and more dungeon-like still, and even if it were light nothing could be seen but the steam boiler, for heating and power purposes, the ventilating apparatus, the numerous trap-door openings and the posts about them, with a few other accessories that are hardly worth mentioning. Again he will be forced to confess that everything is very simple, but he cannot understand any part of it, and again he goes away with a laugh on his lips and merriment in his heart because the people are so easily

pleased, and theatrical managers find it so easy to entertain them.

A visit to the dressing-tent of the circus will be equally barren of appreciable results. He can see the dazzling costumes, the shapely limbs of the females, the gaily-caparisoned steeds, the red gold-laced coats of the supers, and a chaotic heaping up of a number of indescribable articles, but behind the canvas screen that divides the tent lie secrets that he must not attempt to penetrate, for there are the lives, the lies and the fascinations of the performers. There, awkward limbs receive their roundly shaping, and old age, by a magic touch with the elixir of the "make-up" box, puts on the masquerading bloom of youth. The same might, to some extent, be said of the dressing-rooms of the theatre, only the application could not be as wide or general as in the circus profession, for the lives these people lead soon lay waste their beauty if they happen to be young, and crowd senility upon them long before the usual time. Their work is always hard, their surroundings are of the very worst kind, they grow up in an atmosphere of fraud, and they necessarily learn early the arts of deception whereby their employers make fame and fortune. But I have taken a stranger into the dressing-tent, and I must not abuse the hospitality of the place by exposing its sins in his presence. The stranger is introduced all around, shakes hands with everybody, even the premiere equestrienne, or, perhaps, the charming and daring little lady who is twice daily shot out of a cannon, and besides makes two headlong dives a day from the dome of the tent into the net spread beneath. All are glad to see him, and he is surprised to find that the two Indians who juggle fire-brands and do other feats not at all consistent with the traditions of the aborigines,

have not sufficient savage blood in their veins to make respectable cigar store signs, but are base counterfeits of the noble red man, applications of chocolate and vermilion to their faces, and the usual accompaniment of black hair, feathers, and deerskin clothing having bestowed upon them all the air of the child of the forest that they possessed. As the band sounds the music for the riding act the equestrienne's horse dashes tamely into the ring, and the gentlemanly agent of the show pushes the visitor out to have him "look at an act that beats anything of the kind in the world."

As in the material or mechanical features of the show there are mysteries of the most interesting and instructive kind, so, too, the personal features of the realm of entertainment — the great world of amusement — contain much that will not only surprise, but will tickle the unsophisticated. By lifting the veil the least bit, the reader can have a peep at the most attractive of the events and incidents that go to make the romantic career of an actor or actress. There are various little things that look simple and innocent enough when they appear in the shape of a newspaper paragraph that contain a world of meaning to the initiated. There are methods of getting and keeping players before the public of which the latter know no more than they do of the wife of the man in the moon. There are flagrant scandals mingling with the innocent revels of these masquerading people, and there are, too, some of the saintliest, sweetest, manliest and womanliest of individuals in a profession that almost the entire world looks upon with the wildest suspicion, and whose bright names and fair fames can never be tarnished by the iniquitous doings of persons lower and less respectable in character. In all that will be

written here regarding the dark side of theatrical life, I wish it distinctly understood that there is no desire or intention to cast even the slightest reflection upon the honored and respected members of a grand profession, and wherever a seemingly sweeping and uncomplimentary statement may be made, the reader will be kind enough to add a saving clause in favor of all those who do not deserve such condemnation. In the concert saloon, the variety den, the boys' theatre, and the numerous other dives in which vice parades boldly and nakedly, will be found ample field for trenchant and graphic writing. These pits of infamy flourish everywhere, and are as freely patronized as the charms of their female attractions are freely displayed; the girls in short dresses, in gleaming tights, with padded bust and cotton-rounded limbs, their seductive wiles, their beer-thirstiness, their reckless familiarity with male friends and strangers, alike from the beardless boy of fourteen to the bald and withering *roué*, the ample freedom with which they throw themselves into the arms of victims and give themselves up to the most outrageous revels; the female minstrel gang and the break-o'-day girls, who supplement their sins on the stage with subsequent and even more surprising iniquity in the hop or dance that follows the show,— all these phases of the lower strata of theatrical life, as being more productive of interesting secrets of a so-called stage, must be touched upon, that the reader may be able to contrast the extremes of the amusement world, and understand that in mimic as well as real life, there are abject misery and squalid sinfulness while, above all, shines the grand and stainless character of the noble and pure-minded people who bring genius and virtue to the profession of which they are bright, shining ornaments.

CHAPTER II.

A THEATRE OF SHAKESPEARE'S DAY.

If some of the old Greek dramatists could shake together their ashes and assume life, they would open their ancient eyes to look upon the beauty, comfort, and charming symmetry of the first-class theatre of the present day. The ancients were at first obliged to put up with representations given upon rude carts; afterwards stone theatres were constructed, with the performers placed in a pit in the middle space, but no such effort at decoration, or to provide for the convenience of spectators, was to be seen as is to be found everywhere now. The plays, too, while they may have been delightful to our Hellenic predecessors, would hardly draw a corporal's guard at the present time, when spectacular melodrama is all the rage, and the only chorus the average theatre-goer cares to see is the aggregation of pretty girls in entrancing tights, and with the utmost scantiness of clothes to hide their personal charms, who sing the concerted music in comic opera. This is the kind of chorus that sends a thrill of ecstacy through the heart, and around the resplendent dome of thought of the much-maligned modern bald-head. The strophe and anti-strophe of the ancient drama would set the nineteenth century citizen crazy as a wild man of Borneo. The ancient drama was gradually replaced by the ecclesiastical drama, — the mystery or miracle play, — an example of

which remains to us in the celebrated "Passion Play," performed at Obarammergan at stated intervals, and over the projected production of which, in this country, there was so much trouble that the play was never produced. In this style of drama, events in the life of the Savior, or the great mysteries of the church, were the topics dealt with by the saintly play-wright, and the actors personated characters ranging from the Devil up through the various grades of saintliness and angelic beatification to God Almighty himself. The miracle play flourished during the middle ages, and survived down almost to the Elizabethan period, when Shakespeare appeared upon the scene; and with his advent there came a revolution, the outgrowth of which is the present perfect and beautiful theatre. The change in the style of plays brought a change in the style of places for their representations, and while the Bard of Avon was making his reputation in the dramatic line, the Globe and Blackfriars were leading the way to advancement in the matter of theatrical structures. They had performances on Sunday in those olden times, and while good Christians were worshipping God in their sanctuaries, the undevout Britons of the "golden age" were worshipping Thespis in his.

Let us drop back into a theatre of the Shakespearian epoch, some Sunday afternoon when the weather is fine, and you will not be compelled to stand bareheaded in the pit. Let us go to the Globe. It was situated on the Bankside. It was a wooden building, of hexagonal shape, open to the sky, and partly thatched. To a little tower-like projection from the roof was fastened a staff of no inconsiderable height, from which always fluttered the flag of England. Windows were sparsely distributed here and there, on each side of the building, while over the door

was displayed the figure of Hercules bearing the globe upon his brawny shoulders. Whether the mythological giant came with his terrestrial burden to dedicate, *in propria persona*, this temple to the mightiest of the muses, or whether the whole thing was only a cunning contrivance of some skilful artisan, embodying the conception of a clever play writer, history does not record.

Whenever a play was to be enacted, the entrance to the Globe was always jammed with footboys, eager for a chance to hold a gentleman's horse, or lounging gallants, who collected to show themselves and to ogle the ladies as they entered. It was a lively spectacle, as stiff dames and ruffled noblemen, poor artisans and sleek gallants, wits and critics, footmen and laborers and ragged urchins stepped forward to pay the admittance fee of a shilling or a sixpence, or to make a respectful offer of their credit, which was usually most disrespectfully condemned as unlawful tender. It was a lively sight as gouty old gentlemen flourished huge *batons* over the scraggy heads of malicious boys who jostled them purposely; as titled old dames in immense flaring petticoats endeavored to smooth their noble wrinkles, and look mincing and modest under the impertinent gaze of the bedizened fops, and as the fops themselves twisted and bent and bowed and shook their powdered wigs, twirled their glove-fingers, or turned out their toes fastidiously, at the imminent risk of dislocating their tarsals.

But let us enter with the crowd and observe the internal economy of the theatre, and the character of the performance. Though externally hexagonal, the building within is circular in form. There is no roof, as before intimated, and the exhibitions occurring only in the summer and in pleasant weather, the air is

always serene and pure, and the audience requires no protection from storms or wind. In the centre of the enclosure is the pit, as in modern play-houses. Here, "the understanding gentlemen of the ground," as Ben Jonson has it, revelled in the delights of the drama at sixpence a head; the bosom of the earth their sole footstool, and the blue canopy of heaven their only shelter. The "great unwashed did congregate" upon this spot, sometimes in immense numbers, to luxuriate at once in Shakespeare and tobacco; for be it known, the ancient theatres of London were to the working classes very much what its modern porter and beer shops are. They were places of resort where tradesmen and tradesmen's wives assembled to gossip and smoke and steep.

Surrounding the pit upon all sides except where the stage completed the circle, were the boxes or rooms, as they were called. In these were assembled those who could lay claim to rank or wealth. They were furnished with wooden benches — a luxury of which the pit could never boast, and which was purchased for a shilling. It will be observed, from what has been said, that the internal arrangements of the ancient theatres were upon precisely the same plan as those of the modern. The cause of this identity of structure may be easily traced. As late as the reign of Henry VIII., it was customary to enact plays and pageants in the courts of inns. These were usually quadrangular in form, with balconies or piazzas projecting into the court, and corresponding with the stories of the building. The stage was erected near the entrance-gate, and occupied one entire side of the quadrangle. The inn-yard thus formed the pit or parquette, for the accommodation of the "understanding gentlemen," while the balconies or rooms (rising above each other

in tiers varying with the number of stories) corresponded to the boxes. It was from this crude, original conception that the architects of Queen Elizabeth's reign fashioned the Globe and Blackfriars, and from thence has it come down to the present day.

Directly in front of the pit was the stage, protected by a woollen curtain. Unlike modern "drops," it was divided in the middle, and suspended by rings from an iron rod. When the performance was about to commence it was drawn aside — opening from the middle; the rolling up process is an achievment of some later mind.

Hark! Do you hear the gentle grating, the jingling, the rustling of woollen? Without the slightest premonitory symptoms there has been a rupture of the curtain, and the mysteries it so securely hid are most unexpectedly revealed. Seated upon wooden stools or reclining upon the rushes with which the stage is strewn, are a number of individuals composedly smoking long pipes, whom the unsophisticated might take for actors. Far from it; they are the perpetual bane of actors — wits and gallants, who delight in nothing so much as in exhibiting themselves for the public to admire, or confusing the actors by their pleasantries and disturbing the progress of the play.

Protruding from the further wall of the stage is a balcony, supported on wooden pillars, and flanked by a pair of boxes in which those who rejoiced in being singular or who could not afford the full price of admission were accommodated. The balcony was used by the actors. It served as the rostrum when a large company was to be addressed; it was the throne of kings and princes, the grand judgment-seat of mighty umpires, and in cases of necessity was convenient as the

first-story window of an imaginary dwelling-house. For this latter purpose it was particularly useful in the garden scene between Romeo and Juliet. But while we have been delaying in description, the rushes upon the boards have rustled, the actors have made their appearance, and the business of the play has commenced.

For the purpose of illustrating the manner in which performances were conducted, we select the "As You Like It," of Shakespeare, as being most familiar to the general reader, and also peculiarly adapted to our purpose. Orlando and Adam make their appearance, and a signboard nailed to one of the side entrance communicates the altogether unsuspected fact that we are gazing upon an orchard. We see nothing which in any way favors the agreeable illusion: there are the rushes, the smoking fops, the balcony and a maze of pine boards, but nothing that looks like trees. Still, let not these things move you to that degree of uncharitableness or presumption that you doubt whether there be an orchard; does not the infallible board with its painted letters positively affirm, "This be an orchard?" Other *dramatis personæ* soon enter, and the hypothetical orchard becomes the scene of a most animated and interesting colloquy — the assembled company receiving no intimation that the fruit trees are no more, until the curtain falls, or rather is drawn, upon the first act.

When the woolen hangings are again separated, the imagination is no longer painfully strained to support the illusion of the apples, but the unerring board directs the wandering eye to the vast forests of Arden. Here Jaques makes his sublime forest meditations in an area of ten feet by twelve, enclosed in rough pine boards; his enthusiasm, considerably damped by the

provoking witticisms of critics and gallants, and his utterances choked by the volumes of tobacco smoke which roll in lazy, suffocating clouds toward the ceiling from a score of pipes. The affectionate ditties of Orlando are nailed to visionary trees, and he makes passionate love to the fair Rosalind amid fumes which strangle tender phrases, and convert sighings into pulmonary symptoms of a different character.

It should here be observed by way of explanation, that Rosalind, when personated in Elizabeth's time, was fair only by courtesy; for female parts were enacted during her reign, and indeed, during many subsequent reigns, by boys or young men. There is an anecdote related of Charles II., which is a matter of history, and illustrates this point very well. It is said that on one occasion, visiting the theatre at the bringing out of a new play, by some great author, he became impatient at the unusual delay in drawing asunder the curtain. The royal wrath soon became extreme, and it was essential to the prospects of the "management" that it should be appeased. Accordingly, when the vials of imperial indignation were about to be emptied promiscuously upon the assembly, when the storm was just about to burst, a messenger from the green-room informed his majesty that the fair heroine had not finished shaving, — and the tempest immediately subsided. At each successive act new boards with fresh inscriptions inform us of the situation of the performers. The saloons of the duke's palace and the cottage of the peasant — scenes in doors and scenes out of doors — are precisely the same, with the exception of the invariable and ever-changing signboard.

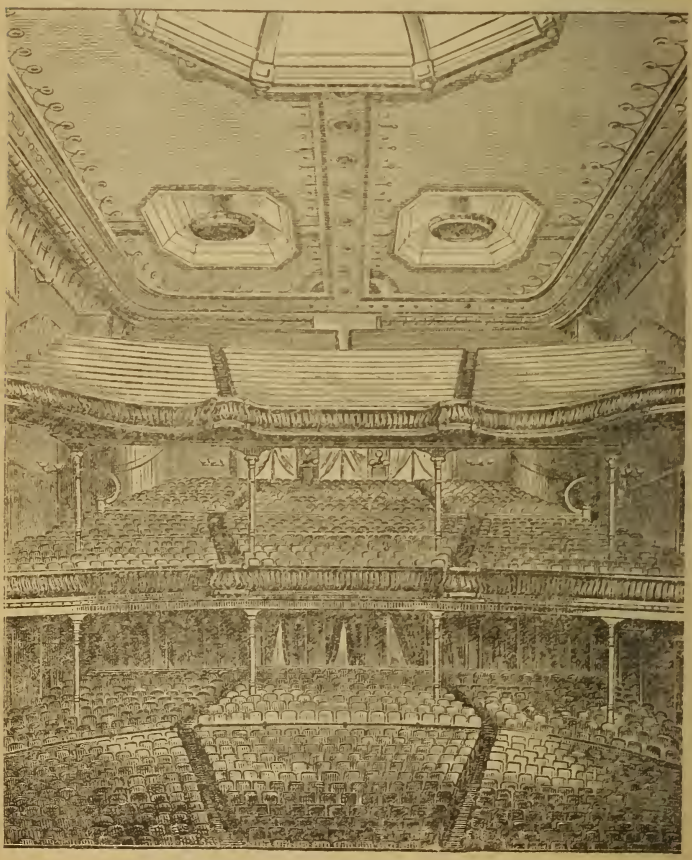
But there is one novelty, one new feature in the representation as the play progresses. It will be

recollected that the balcony was mentioned as furnishing a throne for princes, and a judgment-seat for dispensers of justice. During the wrestling contest between Charles and Orlando, this most serviceable commodity comes into requisition. Here sits the "duke" as umpire of the combat and general of the troops and retainers who stand on guard below. It is quite refreshing to hear his stentorian voice issuing from so unusual a quarter — it furnishes quite an agreeable relief to the tedious monotony of insipid dialogue going on among the rushes below.

The play, however, proceeds rather sluggishly from the utter meagreness and insufficiency of the "scenery, machinery and decorations," so indispensable to the attractiveness of theatrical exhibitions. The tradesmen in the pit turn their backs to the stage and their eyes to the skies, as they clasp affectionately the almost exhausted flagon, and pour into their thirsty throats the residue of half a dozen potations. The crimpled dames in the boxes relax their majestic stiffness, and relapse somnolent into the arms of the gouty old gentlemen, their husbands. The wits and "clever" men upon the stage grow more boisterous in their pleasantries, and fumigate more zealously as they pelt the unfortunate actors with rushes, or trip them as they "exeunt." To the vulgar crowd the only attractions which the performance offers, are the brilliant dresses of the actors and the vestige of a plot which the personation enables them to glean. As a general thing, however, the stage now receives hardly any attention. Pipes, tankards, and gossip are the order of the day, and everybody is glad when Orlando succeeds in obtaining his hereditary rights, wins the hand of the beautiful Rosalind, is dismissed in happi-

ness, and the woolen screen slips along its iron rod for the last time.

Such was the style of dramatic exhibitions in the Elizabethan era. The stage was totally devoid of all scenic appendages calculated to produce the illusion necessary to add interest and intelligence to the plot. Rocks and trees, palaces and hamlets, places of festivity and scenes of shipwreck, all existed merely in the imagination, with neither properties nor scenery to aid in the deception.



INTERIOR OF A MODERN THEATRE.

CHAPTER III.

THE AMERICAN THEATRE.

Good-natured, rosy-cheeked, cheerful little Davy Garrick, as Dr. Johnson called the tragedian, was in the zenith of his glory at the Drury Lane, London, about the middle of the last century, and Goodman's Fields, which had cradled the wonderful actor, was in its decline. It declined so rapidly after Garrick deserted it that its manager, Wm. Hallam, failed in 1750, and the theatre was closed. Hallam at once turned his thoughts toward America as a field in which his fortune might be replenished, — English actors and managers still look upon this country as an El Dorado, — and so he consulted with his brother Lewis Hallam, a comedian, and the two came to the conclusion to organize a company and run the risk of being scalped by what they considered the liberal but bloodthirsty tomahawk-wielding citizens of the New World. They got a company together, twenty-four stock plays, many of them Shakespearian, were selected, with eight farces and a single pantomime," The Harlequin Collector, or The Miller Deceived." Wm. Hallam and his brother were to share the profits of the venture, and the former was to remain at home while the latter managed the company and threw in his services as first low comedian, his wife and children also taking parts in the performances.

Under the direction of Lewis the company, with

some scenery, costumes, and all the usual stage accessories, set sail on board the Charming Sally in 1752. During the voyage when the weather permitted, the company rehearsed their plays on the quarter-deck of the vessel, having the crew and officers for their audience, and receiving from them many manifestations of the delight which their histrionic efforts brought to the Jack Tars' hearts. They landed at Williamsburg, then the capital of Virginia, and the manager after a diligent search found a store-house on the outskirts of the town, which he thought would suit his purpose. This he leased and metamorphosed into a theatre with pit, gallery, and boxes, and having the establishment ready on September 5, 1752, on that day the first performance ever given in America by a regular company of comedians, was given to a presumably large and delighted audience. As was the custom in those days, the bill was a double one, consisting of "The Merchant of Venice" and the farce "Lethe." The cast for "The Merchant of Venice" was as follows: *Bassanio*, Mr. Rigby; *Antonio*, Mr. Clarkson; *Gratiano*, Mr. Singleton; *Salanio* and *Duke*, Mr. Herbert; *Salarino* and *Gobbs*, Mr. Wignel; *Launcelot* and *Tubal*, Mr. Hallam; *Shylock*, Mr. Malone; *Servant to Portia*, Master Lewis Hallam (being his first appearance on any stage); *Nerissa*, Miss Palmer; *Jesica* (her first appearance on any stage), Miss Hallam; *Portia*, Mrs. Hallam. The cast for "Lethe" was as follows (the *Tailor* having been cut out, and the part of *Lord Chalkston* not having been written into the farce at the time the Hallam company left England): *Esop*, Mr. Clarkson; *Old Man*, Mr. Malone; *Fine Gentleman*, Mr. Singleton; *Frenchman*, Mr. Rigby; *Charon*, Mr. Herbert; *Mercury*, Mr. Adcock; *Drunken Man* and *Tattoo*, Mr. Hallam;

John, Mr. Wignel; *Mrs. Tattoo*, Miss Palmer; *Fine Lady*, Mrs. Hallam.

The Williamsburg theatre was a very rude structure, and so near the woods that the manager could, as he often did, stand in the back door of the building and shoot pigeons for his dinner. Still the company remained here for a long time and met with much sucess. The house was finally destroyed by fire and the company removed to Annapolis, where a substantial building was converted to their use and where they remained with fortune favoring them until they got ready to go to New York. This they did in 1753, opening a theatre in the metropolis on September 17th, that on Nassau Street, in a building afterwards occupied by the old Dutch Church. The bill for the first night was "The Conscious Lovers" and the ballad-farce "Damon and Phillida." But three performances were given each week — on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays — and this continued to be the rule up to the beginning of the present century. The price of admission was eight shillings to the boxes, six shillings to the pit and three shillings to the gallery. This was on the first night, but the second night the prices were lowered to six shillings, five shillings, and three shillings for boxes, pit, and gallery respectively, and by the middle of October a fourth reduction was made, so that admission to the pit could be had for four shillings and to the gallery for two shillings. The performance began at six o'clock, and on the bill for the opening night appears a request that ladies and gentlemen will come to the theatre in time, and a statement that nothing under the full price will be taken during the entire performance. This seems to be a departure from the custom of the mother country, where half price was received for admission after the third act. The Nassau Street theatre was closed on the evening of

March 18, 1754, with "The Beggars' Opera" and "The Devil to Pay."

While the company was still in New York, Manager Hallam was endeavoring to come to terms with the Quakers of Philadelphia, who strenuously objected to having players in their midst, or to allowing stage representations in their city. Mr. Malone, a member of the company, was at length sent on to the Quaker City, as Hallam's ambassador, and after considerable trouble succeeded in obtaining Gov. Hamilton's permission to present twenty-four plays and their attendant farces provided there was nothing indecent or immoral in them. In April, 1754 the company gave its first performance in Philadelphia, playing the tragedy of "The Fair Penitent," and the farce, "Miss in Her Teens." The building occupied by the actors is designated by William Dunlap, the historian of the early American theatre, as "the store-house of a Mr. Plumstead," and was situated "on the corner of the first alley above Pine Street." After the twenty-four performances had been given by "authority of his excellency," Gov. Hamilton, the players were allowed to add six more nights, after which they returned to New York. Here they erected a theatre on Cruger's wharf, between Old Slip and Coffee House Slip, and prospered.

Boston did not have a theatre until 1792, and then got its first place of amusement only because Wignell and three other members of Hallam's company, for some reason or other, seceded from it. The seceders brought to their standard some money men of the Hub, a building was erected, and on August 16, 1792, the first show was given; feats on the tight rope and acrobatic and other artists contributing to the entertainment. Five years later New York had two theatres, one on the Johns, and the other on Greenwich Street, and when the nineteenth century began, amusements were in

flourishing condition in all the large cities of the country, and the theatre had taken firm root and gave full promise of its present prosperity in the New World.

They were a queer band, these early strollers on American soil. It reads like a romance to follow them through the history of their early struggles, and to scrutinize the personal peculiarties of the individuals who composed the company. One of them — I forget which at the present moment — was an imaginative fellow given up to all sorts of schemes and inventions, and published far and wide the announcement that he had discovered a process of manufacturing salt from sea water. A member of one of the earliest orchestras — a short time after Hallam had ceased furnishing music to his audience with "one Mr. Pelham and his harpischord" or the single fiddle of a Mr. Hewlett — had been a Catholic priest in Switzerland, and had suffered the tortures of the Inquisition. He told his story to his manager one day and it was really touching. His mother, he said, had dedicated him in his infancy to the priesthood. When he became old enough he was placed in a theological seminary, instructed and duly ordained. He was a priest when Spain went to war against France. His canton raised a regiment, and the priest being made its chaplain accompanied it to Madrid. In Madrid he for the first time learned to love. He met in the street a handsome Spanish lady who won his heart and lit the fire of passion in his frame. He became acquainted with her, and ascertained that the lady reciprocated his affection. There were many moments of stolen pleasure, many sighs and vows, until they finally agreed to flee together to America. The day and hour were agreed upon, and the lovers were in readiness, when a strong hand was laid upon the recreant priest's shoulder and he was thrown into prison. He realized his awful

position at once, knowing that he was in the power of that monster, the Inquisition. For weeks he remained chained to the floor of his cell. Once he was led out to execution, but by some miracle or accident, was saved. At last, having suffered severely, he was put to the torture, and weak, dying, and distracted was led to the gate of his prison, thrust out into the street, and warned as he valued his life to leave Madrid within ten days. It is needless to say he did so, and never learned or saw anything more of his Spanish sweetheart.

From the rude and uncomfortable theatre of a century ago, with dressing-rooms under the stage, and but a single fiddle or harpsichord player for the orchestra, with poorly lighted and illy ventilated auditoriums, with meagre scenery and ragged wardrobes — from the primitive theatre of the New World has grown the magnificent, symmetrical, and elegantly appointed houses of amusement of the present day — structures beautifully and chastely ornamented in their exteriors, while their interiors have received the most delicate touches of the artist's brush and the most careful attention from the upholsterer — beautiful in color and drapery, rich in furniture, and the very perfection of architectural design. Our stages are revelations of dramatic completeness, sometimes presenting scenic pictures that challenge nature itself in their attractiveness, and at all times surrounding the actors of a play with accessories gorgeous and extensive enough to mystify as well as delight nine out of every ten patrons of the theatre. The manner in which these extraordinary and pleasing illusions are produced is one of the great secrets of the stage, and when the mechanism employed is explained the reader will be surprised to learn how simple and almost undisguised are the methods whereby the people behind the scenes work and multiply wonders.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE STAGE-DOOR.

The patrons of the theatre must all find their way into the house through the front doors; only the privileged few are allowed access to the mysteries and wonders of the stage through the back door. Here stands a gentleman, generally of repulsive mien and unattractive manners, whose special business it is to see that nobody, not entitled to do so, penetrates the sacred precincts, and who learns at once to distinguish between the people who come prying around his bailiwick merely for curiosity, and those who are there to "mash" a susceptible ballet girl or perhaps an indiscreet member of the company. Those who are led to the stage-door by curiosity are numerous and they are all promptly repulsed; and the "mashers" who stand at the stage-door after the performance is over, must get into the good graces of the door-keeper, and retain his friendship if they desire the course of true love to run smoother than the old adage says it runs.

In the large theatres of Eastern cities the cerberus who guards the stage entrance generally has a little sentry box just inside the door, with a window cut in it, a stove placed inside in cold weather, a number of pigeon-holes for letters, and indeed all modern conveniences, as the saying goes. Here he sits and smokes, hailing everybody who passes in and saying a kind or snarling word to all who pass out. If the mail

has brought a letter for any member of the company, or a "masher" has sent one of the girls a dainty little note expressive of the sentiment that is swelling in his twenty-six-inch bosom, the cerberus will have it, and will hand it out to the person for whom it is intended with an appropriate and not always complimentary remark about it. Sometimes this guardian of the theatric arcana will take advantage of his position to tyrranize over the ballet girls and other subordinates of a company, and will rule in his autocratic way to his own pecuniary and other profit. In the East he is made a kind of time-keeper, notes when the performers appear for duty and when they are absent, besides otherwise making himself serviceable to the management and careful of the interests of his house.

A story is told about one of them — I think his name was Bulkhead — who was employed at a theatre where the ballet was large, and the girls paid very liberal tribute to him. They gave him silk handkerchiefs of the prettiest and most expensive kind to wipe his fantastic mug on; they paid for innumerable hot drinks with which he rounded out the waist of his pantaloons; they dropped cigars into his always outstretched paw, and otherwise drained their own resources to make Mr. Bulkhead as happy and comfortable as possible. He, at first, took whatever was offered, but soon grew bold, and demanded fifty cents each of their little five dollars a week, every salary day. The girls made up their minds not to accede to this demand, which they deemed unjust and exorbitant; they not only positively refused to give Bulkhead any money, but would give him nothing else, not even a two-cent cigar. As a result, about one-half of the girls forfeited a portion of their salaries next pay-day. This

aroused all the fury there was in the entire ballet, and when they found out, too, that Bulkhead had driven away their male admirers they were as wild as so many hyenas. It did not take long for them to hit upon a means of wreaking vengeance upon the heartless and unscrupulous door-keeper. They clubbed together what change they had and got Bulkhead boiling drunk; by the time the show was over on that (to him) memorable night he did not know which way to look for Sunday. After the final curtain had fallen and the lights were dimmed, Bulkhead sat at the door on his stool swaying like an unsteady church-steeple and snoring like an engine when its boiler is nearly empty. The girls picked him up and carried him into a remote corner of the stage, where they piled a lot of old scenery around him after tying his hands and feet securely. Then they got red and blue fire ready, almost under his cherry red and panting nose; one of the girls took her position at the thunder drum; another had hold of the rain wheel; another was at the wind machine; a fourth got a big brass horn out of the music room and a fifth got the bass drum; the remainder stood ready to lend assistance with their hands and throats. At a given signal the thunder rolled louldly, the wind whistled vigorusly, the rain came down in torrents, the brass horn moaned piteously, the bass drum was beaten unmercifully, and pans of burning blue and red fire were poked through crevices in the piled-up machinery right under the drunken door-keeper's nostrils, while all the girls shouted at the tops of their voices and clapped as enthusiastically as if they were applauding a favorite. Bulkhead after opening his eyes and having his ears assailed by the din, shouted wildly for assistance and mercy and all kinds of things; but he got neither assistance nor mercy. The racket con-

—See p. 18.

tinued for nearly ten minutes when quiet and darkness were restored, and the girls quietly stole away leaving Bulkhead alone in his agony under the pile of scenery, where he was found by the stage carpenter next morning, a first-class, double-barrelled case of jim-jams. He is now in an insane asylum, and employs most of his time telling people that notwithstanding all Bob Ingersoll's buncombe and blarney there must be a hereafter, for he has himself been through the sunstroke section of it.

The ballet girls of another theatre played an equally effective and amusing trick upon an obnoxious scene painter. The artist had been in the habit of painting posts, doorsteps, etc., in the neighborhood of the stage-door in colors that were not readily perceptible, and when the young ladies' "mashes" came around after the performance to wait for them to dress, they innocently sat down upon or leaned against the fresh paint and ruined their clothes. The scene painter and his friend were always in the neighborhood to raise a laugh when the disaster was made known, and the result was that the gay young men would come near the stage-door no more, and that the sweetly susceptible creature known as the ballet girl was obliged to go home alone, supperless. Well, one day the girls found the artist asleep against his paint-table with a half emptied pitcher of beer by his side. This was their opportunity. One of the girls who was of a decorative Oscar-Wilde-like turn of mind got a small brush while another held the colors, and in ten minutes they had that man's face painted so that he would pass for a whole stock of scenery; the tattooed Greek was a mere five-cent chromo alongside of him, and a Sioux Indian with forty pounds of war-paint on would be a ten-cent side-show beside a twelve-monster-shows-in-

one-under-a-single-canvas exhibition. In this elaborate but undecorative condition the scene painter wandered off to a neighboring saloon, the wonder and merriment of all who saw him. He did not understand the cause

DECORATING A SCENE PAINTER.

of the general stare and unusual laugh at him, until a too sensitive friend took him to a mirror and showed him his frescoed features. Profanity and gnashing of

teeth followed, and the artist was prevented from going back to the theatre to murder ten or twelve people only by a thoughtful policeman who picked him up as he flew out through the door of the saloon, and carried him off to the calaboose. He was sorry when he got sober, and from that day to this has not attempted to paint the coat-tails of the ballet girls' lovers.

A great many of these lovers, as they are designated, are bold and heartless wretches, who have in some way or other obtained an introduction to or scraped acquaintance with the sometimes fair young creatures who fill in the crevices and chinks of a play, or air their limbs in the labyrinths of a march, or shake them in some strange and fascinating dance. They look upon the ballet girl, whether she be a dancer or merely below the line of utility, as legitimate prey, and without the slightest scruple will waylay or spread a net to catch her in some quiet but successful manner. They forget that many girls enter the theatre with the intention of making honorable and honest livings; that they prize their virtue as highly as the most respected young lady who moves in the topmost circles of the best society, and that the theatrical profession is only misrepresented by the men and women who give themselves up to debauchery, and allow their passions to run riot to such an extent that they win notoriety of the most unsavory and unenviable kind. It is only because the stage is besieged by so many scoundrels and villains who have either bought or begged the privileges of the back door that the profession is dangerous to young and innocent girlhood. The stage itself is pure, and could be kept so, if these hangers-on were only done away with and the youthful student and aspirant for histrionic honors were allowed to pursue her vocation unassailed by the handsome tempters who begin by flattery and after an usually easy con-

quest, end the dream of love by rudely casting the fallen girl aside to make room for another victim.

Stand here in the shadow awhile. The performance is at an end, and the gentlemen who haunt the stage-door are beginning to assemble. There are probably a half dozen of them. They stand around sucking the heads of their canes and anxiously awaiting the appearance of their inamoratas. A burlesque company has the theatre this week, and there are probably eighteen or twenty handsome young ladies in the combination. Nearly every one of them is a "masher," and can be depended upon to hit the centre of a weak male heart, with an arrow from her beaming eye, at one hundred yards. Some of them have received tender notes from the front of the house during the night, making appointments for a private supper at one of the free and easy restaurants; others have met their gentlemen friends before and can depend upon them to wait at the stage-door every night. Those who send the notes during the performance are of what is classed as the ultra-cheeky kind. A man of this class will do anything to make the acquaintance of a ballet or chorus girl. I knew one, one night, to push a dozen different notes under the door of Eme Rousseau's dressing-room, which opened into the parquette, and he would not desist until Samuel Colville, the manager, caused him to be dragged out of the theatre and given over to the police. Another gentleman of the same proclivities having failed to gain Alice Oates's attention when she was in Chicago, followed her to St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Louisville, and still being unable to effect a proper "mash," endeavored to introduce himself successfully and gain her favor forever by making her a present of a pair of fast horses. Alice

very sensibly refused to accept the gift, and told the fond and foolish young man to go home to his mother.

Many cases of this kind might be cited to show how easily the women who enter the profession, partly for the purpose of prostituting their art, find easy conquest among the hair-brained fellows who are only too willing to be captives and rarely try to break the fetters of roses with which they find themselves bound. But keep here in the shadow a while and watch the manœuvres of the "mashers." The stage-door opens and out comes a very modest little girl. She does not belong to the combination playing at the house this week, but is a member of the regular ballet of the theatre, — one of the few poor creatures who are obliged to get into ridiculous costumes of enormous dresses or unpadded tights, to increase the throng of court-ladies, the number of pages, or add to the proportions of a crowd. She does not dress any better than a girl who finds employment in a factory. She is young, however, and stage-struck. She has gone into the profession, braving all its dangers and with a firm resolution to go unscathed through it, carrying with her a sincere love for art and a burning desire to attain eminence. But alas! she has little talent, and absolutely no genius. This can be seen and appreciated already, although she has not had two lines to speak since entering the theatre. She has been in the employ of the house only since the beginning of the season. The "mashers" part to make room for her as with eyes cast down she trips along the street. Some of them say smart and pretty things, and some have the impudence to raise their hats and bid her good-evening. She pays no attention to them, however, and it is probably fortunate that the tall muscular gentleman in work-day clothes who has had a pass to the gallery or

may not have been in the theatre at all, and who is waiting a block below to escort her home, does not know the petty insults that are put upon her or the snares that beset her path. Every night the big burly fellow waits for the modest little ballet girl to see her home in safety. The girl does not tell them at home to what dangers she is exposed, and they never learn until sometime the fall comes, when a troupe of negro minstrels or a large comic opera chorus invade the house and lay siege to the hearts of all the females they find behind the scenes.

Here come two laughing blondes through the stage door. The light falling upon their faces shows that although they try to appear light and cheery, there is weariness in their limbs and perhaps distress in their hearts. They select their male friends at once; indeed, the latter have been waiting for the gay burlesquers.

"Charley dear, I didn't see you in front to-night," says one.

"Neither did I," says the other; "but George was there. I could tell him by his red eyes and cherry nose."

"Yes," responds Charley, "there was too much champagne in that last bottle, and I didn't care about getting out of bed until half an hour ago."

"You had considerable of the juicy under your vest, last night," the first girl remarks; and then there is a laugh, and Charley says he feels in a good humor for tackling more wine at that particular moment, and the quartette move off to a hack-stand, jump into an open carriage and with lots of laughter the party are driven away to some suburban garden with wine-room attachment, or to some urban restaurant where wine may flow as freely as morality may fade away with the

speeding hours, and the pleasure may last just as long as the restauranteur thinks he is being well paid for the privileges of his establishment.

Another girl comes through the stage-door. She is probably twenty-four years of age, is tall, handsome, and most attractive in her manners. There is the least suspicion of the matron in her appearance, that dignity of carriage that characterizes women after marriage being clearly defined in her motions. She knows somebody has been waiting for her, — a young fellow as tall, handsome, and attractive as herself. He sees her at once as she comes out, and goes to meet her. Her footsteps are bent in his direction also. As they come together she lays her hand upon his extended arm, and says: —

"No, Fred, I cannot go to-night. Sister is sick at the hotel, and the baby has no one to take care of her. I must go home to my child."

"Pshaw!" says Fred, "I had everything arranged for an elegant drive and a rattling supper."

"I'm so sorry, Fred;" the woman pleads, "but I can't go to-night. You will have to excuse me this once. You know it was daylight when we parted this morning."

"I know," her friend insisted; "but what's the use in worrying about the baby. She's propably asleep now and won't need your care. Come, go along."

"No, I cannot. I will not to-night." But Fred continues to plead, asking the pleasure of her presence at a supper, just for a half hour and no more. Unable to resist the warmth of his appeals, she at last consents, and it is safe to say, that once the evening's entertainment begins, morning breaks upon the sleepy babe and sick sister at the hotel before Fred and his companion are ready to part.

I knew a friend — a dramatic writer — who stood at the back door one night and waited for a pair of pretty chorus singers. My friend had another friend with him — a prominent merchant. The two gay and giddy young girls, who were only foolish flirts, did not know that the gentlemen who had invited them to a midnight ride and a late supper were married. Indeed, they may not have cared. So when the opera of "Olivette" was over and the pair of chorus singers emerged at the back door of the stage and found the two gentlemen waiting patiently for them, the girls each gave over a bundle to her particular friend to have him carry in his pocket until such time as the quartette got ready to separate. The bundles each contained a pair of pink "symmetricals" — padded tights. The young ladies informed their friends of this fact, and cautioned them to be sure to return the bundles before leaving. Well, the night wore on joyously with wine and singing and the usual pleasures of a late drive. At last, at 3 A. M., the girls got ready to return to their hotel. They were driven thither, and the entire party having imbibed more wine than was necessary, soft and sweet adieus were so tenderly spoken that nobody thought about the two pairs of pink symmetricals. The gentlemen ordered the carriage driver to speed homeward with them, and he did so. First the dramatic writer disembarked at the door of his residence, ran up stairs, pulled off his clothes, and was soon sound asleep. The merchant was soon at his own door, had settled with the driver and the carriage had just rolled away when, as he was fumbling at the latch-key he thought of the pair of tights. With one bound he cleared the steps, and running into the street, shouted after the carriage. The driver heard him, stopped, and was given the pair of tights to take around to the chorus girl's hotel that day and a $5

bill to pocket for the services. It was a narrow escape for the merchant. For the dramatic writer it was no escape at all. He was rudely awakened at ten o'clock in the morning, and the first sight that met his eyes was his infuriated wife holding the pair of pink tights by the toes and stretching them out so that the sin of the husband stood revealed to him in all its fulness.

"Where did these come from?" the exasperated wife shrieked, flaunting them before the husband's eyes.

"Where did you get them?" He asked, trembling, and unable to think of any good excuse to make.

"I got them in your coat pocket," his spouse shouted, piling up the evidence and agony in a way that was excruciating.

"By jingo! is that so?" exclaimed the husband, coming suddenly to a sitting posture in bed, and bringing his hands together vehemently. "Now, I'll bet $4 Charley ———," giving the name of his merchant friend put them there. He told me he had a pair that he was going to make a present of to one of the "Olivette" girls at the ———"

Brilliant as this thought was, it did not satisfy the little lady. She kept up the argument all day, and that night paid a visit to the merchant's wife, where the affair got into such a tangle that the two husbands brought in a bachelor friend to shoulder the blame, and who made the excuse that the whole thing was a trick put up by a few gentlemen (among them the bachelor was not) on the dramatic man and merchant to get them into domestic trouble, as they had succeeded in doing, beyond their most sanguine desires.

And now that we have been long enough at the back door of the theatre, let us go home and come around to-morrow night to have a view of the plagues and annoyances to be found before the foot-lights.

CHAPTER V.

BEFORE THE FOOT-LIGHTS.

There are people who patronize the theatre who do not go there simply to see the play or to be pleased by the players, and whose interest in the stage is more than double discounted by the interest they manifest in and towards the audience. The "masher" makes it a market in which to display his fascinations and call upon the susceptible fraction of femininity to inspect and avail themselves of his heart-breaking and soul-wasting wares. Whether he modestly takes his stand in the rear of the auditorium, overcoat on arm and stovepipe hat gracefully poised upon the thumb of his left hand, while, with polished opera-glass, he sweeps the sea of variegated millinery and obtrusive-hued cosmetics, or bravely hangs up his charms to view on the front row of the dress circle, or prominently displays them in a proscenium box, he is ever the same offensive and shameless barber-and-tailor-shop decoration, moved by a wild ambition to attract and hold feminine attention, and always attaining to a degree of notoriety among the masculine theatre-goers that keeps him overwhelmed with contempt, and causes him to be as readily recognized as if he had a tag tied to his back or spread across his vest front, declaring him to be a fisher after femininity. When the "masher" takes the shape of the young blood, whose short and tightly-fighting coat is matched by the shallowness of the

crown of his straight-brimmed hat, and whose eye-glasses straddle his nose as gracefully as his twenty-five-cent cane is carried in his hand, and this irresistible combination of attractions is thrust upon the audience from a box opening, the acme of the lady-killing art is reached and if all the world does not admire the effective tableau it must be because all the world is unappreciative and the "masher" stands on an æsthetic plane to which the rest of mankind cannot hope to aspire.

THE "MASHER."

But the "masher" is only a fraction of the class of amusement patrons to which attention has been called in the opening sentence of this chapter. Apart from the people who deem it their duty to come tramping into the theatre while the performance is going on, and whose coming is followed by a triumphal flourish of banging seats, and the heaving footbeats of hurrying ushers, to the intense disgust of all who care to hear the first act of the play, there are others who have a hundred ways of annoying an audience, and who make a very effectual use of their gifts in this direction. There is the member of the "profesh," — the gaseous advance agent, or the bloviate business manager, the actor "up a stump," or the "super" who has played the part of a silent but spectacular lictor with John McCullough or Tom Keene, and who sits in the rear of the house, but sufficiently forward to be distinctly heard by people in the dress

circle, criticising the mannerisms of the ladies or gentlemen on the stage and "guying" everybody in the cast from the star down to the frightened and stiff-kneed little ballet girl whom an inscrutable Providence has allowed to wander in upon the scene occasionally, to say, "Yes, mum," or "No, mum." The leisurely but loud professional who thus disports himself must necessarily enjoy a large share of the audience's attention, and the more of this he attracts the more he is encouraged to be extravagant in his criticisms and unreserved in his elocution. He sometimes must dispute the title to obstreperous obtrusiveness with some liquor-laden auditor who has succeeded in passing the door-keeper only to find that the heat of the house has accelerated his inebriation and given freedom and license to his tongue until the "bouncer" lifts him out of his seat by the collar and deposits him in a reflective and emetic mood on the curbstone in front of the theatre. Then, too, a crowd of friends sometimes get together in the parquette, who begin a conversation before the first curtain rises and keep it going on in careless and annoying tones until the final flourish of the orchestra arrives with the dimming of the lights as the audience files out. But if the loud members of the "profesh," the interjective inebriate, and the crowd of communicative friends are not on hand to furnish diversion for the folks who are trying to follow what is going forward on the stage, there is one other never-failing source of distraction and annoyance — the giddy and gushing usher. It is safe to bet that just when the most pathetic passage of a play is reached, or the tragedian is singing smallest, a few ushers will throw themselves hastily together in the lobby and hold a mass meeting long and loud enough to be taken for a November night political meeting, if there were only

a stake wagon and a few Chinese lanterns strewn around. Indeed, the usher seems to assume that he is a sort of safety-valve through which a disturbance must break out now and then to offset the quiet of the audience. If the usher isn't plying his fiendish proclivity, some bald-headed man in the parquette is sure to throw his skating rink over the back of the seat, and, with shinning brow turned up towards the sun-burner in the dome, mouth rounded out like the base of a cupola and nostrils working like a suction pump, his beautiful snore will rise above the wildest roar of the orchestra and drown the mellifluous racket of the big bass drum, until some friendly hand disturbs the dreamer, and the "or-g-g-g-g-g-g-g!" that rushes up his nostrils, down his throat and out through his ears, is thus gently and perhaps only temporarily interrupted. The enthusiast — the man who is carried away by the spirit of the scene — is also a source of annoyance, and when he signifies from the balcony his willingness to take a hand in what is being enacted on the stage, damning the villian heartily, and, like the sailor of old, openly sympathizing with femininity in distress, he first becomes a target for the gallery boys' gutter wit and finally a prey to the inexorable "bouncer," who roams around the upper tiers of every theatre and unceremoniously dumps disturbers down stairs. Last, but by no means least, in the distracting and disturbing features at theatrical performances is the peanut cruncher. He is the most cold-blooded and least excusable of all the annoyances with which amusement patrons are afflicted. He wraps his teeth around the roasted goober, utterly reckless of the distress he is stirring up in the bosoms of those around him, and he grinds and smacks and continues to crunch, stopping occasionally to charge his dental quartz-crusher anew,

and always beginning on the latest goober with the greatest ferocity, while he seems to make it go ten times further, as far as time and agony are concerned, than any of its predecessors. All the other disturbance consequent upon attending a play are petty, compared with peanut-crunching, and it is the opinion of the writer that a law should be passed at once, making it a felony for any banana-stand or hand-cart man to sell peanuts to citizens who are on their way to the theatre. If such a law were passed, and if it were not a dead letter, the people whose backbones feel as if they were being fondled by a circular saw every time they hear the rustling of a goober-shell, would flop right down an their knees and renew their confidence in the wisdom of Providence.

The young men and the old men, too, who go out "between acts" to hold spirit seances with neighboring bar-keepers, while the orchestra is playing a Strauss waltz or a medley of comic opera numbers for the solace of the lovely ladies they have left behind them, are a greater nuisance to the audience of a first-class theatre than one would imagine. In nine cases out of ten, the man who goes out to see another man, as the saying is, has his seat in the middle of a row, so that it is necessary for him to make trouble for ten or a dozen persons before he can reach the aisle. He tramples on ladies' dresses, comes into collision with their knees, and sends a thrill of pain to the utmost ends of the roots of every man's corn he treads on. The same thing is repeated on the way back to his seat, and there are bitter mutterings, a great deal of subdued or smothered profanity, and fierce, rebuking looks flash from beneath the beautiful bonnets of the females. It doesn't seem to affect the nuisance any, however, for he does the same thing over every act, and at each rep-

etition increases to the damage he does and the commotion he creates. Then, to make bad worse, he manages to surround himself with a distillery odor that assails feminine nostrils in a most offensive manner, and that will not suffer itself to be concealed or tempered by the chewing of coffee-grounds, cloves, or orange-peel. I witnessed the discomfiture of a young man of this kind, one night, and the scene was a very funny one. He occupied a seat in the orchestra, in the centre of a row of seats principally filled with ladies. As the curtain went down the young man determined to go over and have a look through the saloon opposite. Unwilling to incommode the ladies in the least, the young man, with Chesterfieldian grace, elevated a pedal extremity over the back of his chair, with the intention of going out through the aisle behind. Unfortunately he stepped between the seat and the back, the movable seat flew up, and the thirsty young man was left astride of the chair in a decidedly uncomfortable position. By this time the gallery gods had marked him for their victim. They hooted, whistled, cat-called, and made slang remarks about straddling the "ragged edge," to his evident discomfiture. In vain he attempted to disengage his No. 10's. The rest of the audience became interested, and opera-glasses were directed toward the blushing young man. The feminine giggles in his neighborhood rendered him frantic; laughter and uproar were becoming general, when a good-natured individual kindly assisted him to escape from his awkward position. Amid "thunders of applause" he disappeared.

The ladies, too, sometimes contribute largely to the annoyance of an audience. They are, as everybody knows, inveterate talkers, and insist on saying almost as much during a performance as the players say.

Their criticism of the toilets of friends and of strangers also, is loud-sweeping and usually denunciatory, and they have a style of pillorying their victims in speech that is decidedly heartless, yet refreshing. But all the faults of loud and untamed talk might have been forgiven had they not introduced the tremendous big hats which rise high above their heads and stick far out from their ears completely shutting off a view of the stage from the persons immediately in the rear. Strong men have shed tears to find themselves conquered by these big hats; they have tried to peep around them, and have stood tip-toed on their chairs to have a glance over the tops of the millinery structures, but in vain. The hats were too much for them. In a mild, æsthetic way the ladies' big hats rank among the greatest plagues that have ever visited the modern play-house.

THE BIG HAT.

I was in the Grand Opera House at St. Louis, one evening, sitting in seat No. 3, row B, centre section, parquette circle. Before the play began two ladies, one dressed in black silk with a white satin jacket and black beaver hat, with long sweeping feather, and the other plainly dressed in black cashmere, with a "Sensation" hat and tassel on, came in and took seats 1 and 2 in row A, same section. Prior to settling down in their places, they looked inquiringly around the rear

of the theatre, one remarking to the other as they plumped down in the chairs, "I suppose they haven't got here yet." Seats three and four adjoining them were vacant. The ladies had come unattended. After they had arranged themselves the lady with the beaver hat drew out a letter and held it up to the light so that the reporter could read it. It had a cut of one of the principal hotels at the top and was note-paper from that establishment. It said: —

To Mamie and Sadie: Your note of to-day received. We like your style and enclose two seats for Grand Opera House to-night, where we hope to meet you both and make your acquaintance.

Yours sincerely, George and Harry.

Just as the orchestra began the overture in walked two gentlemen whom the usher showed to the vacant seats in row A. One of the men was tall, bald, portly and rather good-looking and well dressed; he had a sandy mustache, and what hair was left on his head was reddish, crisp, and curly. He was probably forty-five years old. His companion was probably not more than twenty-one, tall, thin, dark-complexioned, with but a semblance of a mustache. The ladies smiled as the gentlemen took their places. The men looked at each other, winked, and laughed. When the two were seated, the bald-headed man made a close and evidently satisfactory scrutiny of the ladies, and catching the eye of the one in the beaver hat, the two exchanged smiles — not broad, committal grins, but soft smiles of mutual recognition. The second lady only dared to look sideways now and then. The second gentleman, who sat next to the ladies, was rather shy and kept his hand up to his face from beginning to end of the play. It was evident this was the first time the

quartette had met, and it was evident also that they had made up their minds to act with all due decorum while in the theatre. Smiles were now and then exchanged, but no words were spoken. Once one of the ladies sent her programme to the bald man, who had none. During the third act of the play the baldhead began writing short notes which the lady in the beaver hat answered affirmatively with a nod of her head. When the show was over the two ladies went around one street, the two men around another, and they met in the middle of the block opposite the theatre. There was a brief conversation in which a great deal of tittering was heard, and then the quartette proceeded to a quiet restaurant of the most questionable reputation and took one of the private supper-rooms, which are at the disposal of people whose visit to the establishment is not by any means for the sole purpose of drinking and eating, but has a broad and very unmistakable suggestion of immorality in it.

GEORGE AND HARRY.

The key to the whole affair can be found in the fol-

LOUISE MONTAGUE.

lowing advertisement published in the *Globe-Democrat* of the preceding Sunday : —

PERSONAL. — Two gentlemen of middle age and means desire to become acquainted with two vivacious, fun-loving young ladies who like to go to the theatre. Address George and Harry, this office.

MAUD BRANSCOMB.

George and Harry had received an answer to this advertisement from "Mamie and Sadie," and, just to meet and become acquainted with them, had purchased the four seats in row A, centre section, Grand Opera

House, making the theatre their place of assignation. "Mamie and Sadie" were by no means the innocent and unsophisticated creatures they seemed to be. One of them was the wife of a travelling man who was necessarily away from home ten months in a year; the other was *nymph du pave* — a street-walker — who scoured the principal thoroughfares at night for victims to carry to her "furnished room," and who had been educated up to the "personal" racket by the lonely and wayward young wife of the commercial drummer.

So much for the noisy, otherwise obtrusive phases of the subject. The ladies who go to the theatre to display themselves, to flash their jewels and flaunt their silks and laces in the faces of the community, have become so accustomed to the general run of theatrical attractions that they are really no longer spectators, and may be justly classed among the distracting agencies in the audience. Their mission is a "mashing" one to a certain extent, but it is "mashing" of a vain and by no means harmful character. Other ladies are seen in the dress circle and the boxes who do not disguise the fact that they have come to the theatre to fascinate the too, too yielding men. At the matinees there are women of questionable repute who unblushingly advertise their calling and who must be set down as a feature most objectionable to the respectable portion of any community. They behave themselves as far as words or actions go, but their mere presence in the play-house is an annoyance that refined and elegant people cannot tolerate. That is all about them. Now for the very worst practices that are occasionally noted in theatres, and that the managers know very little if anything about, — the women who are there for nefarious purposes, and the men who

have other ideas than gratifying their vanity or merely making heart-conquests. It is a notorious and flagrant fact that fast women use the theatre as places of assignation, wherein they meet old and make new acquaintances, and it is equally notorious that men whose whole energy seems bent to the distruction of innocent girlhood make it a rendezvous for the purpose of selecting and snaring their victims.

It is perfectly safe to assume that the cunning and sinful pair fleeced George and Harry before they got through with them.

The very same evening my attention was called by a young lady to a thinly-bearded, spectacled, sickly-looking middle-aged man who sat in the next seat to the lady, and who, she complained, had stepped on her foot several times and in other ways tried to attract her attention and get her into a conversation. I at once recognized the fellow as one of an unscrupulous set who pored over big ledgers in the Court-House, and gave the greater portion of their time to discussions concerning female friends of ill-repute, and to boasting of the ruin they had brought or were about to bring to some innocent young girl.

The same man was in the habit of buying single seats in the dress circle and visited the theatre frequently. He represents a class of venerable, but iniquitous fellows who make a practice of mixing in among the ladies, in the hope of scraping an occasional acquaintance, and who have no good intention in desiring to extend the circle of their female friends. They should be kept out of every respectable place of amusement.

(68) SELINA DOLARO.

CHAPTER VI.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

My first experiences behind the scenes were in a small, dark cellar, owned by a man who is now a member of the Missouri Legislature, and where daily and nightly a select company of would-be Ethiopian comedians of tender age gave performances to small crowds of children each of whom had paid an admission fee in pins or corks — for we valued the corks highly as a necessary portion of our stock in trade; we charred many a one to blacken our faces and treasured them as if they were worth their weight in gold. Our stage was roughly constructed of boards laid upon barrels; bagging material hung around the rear and sides of the stage to shut in the mysteries of the remarkable dressing-room we had, and an old gray cloth and blanket formed the curtain which parted in the middle in the manner of the stage curtains of the Elizabethan age. Bits of candles were our foot-lights and the audience, made up of boys and girls, were satisfied to sit for hours on rude benches stretched across the width of the cellar. We played nothing but black-face pieces, and as they were not taken from books, but were the memories of sketches we had seen in some pretentious theatrical resort, they were, of course, short and entirely crude. No member of that little band has risen to greatness in the theatrical profession, but I think every one of them now living looks back fondly to the triumphs of our cellar career. To me

that rude stage and its gunny-bag surroundings were more interesting and full of mystery than have been any of the wonderful and beautiful temples of Thespis which I have since entered; and I think when I played

JOHN W. M'CULLOUGH.

the part of *Ephraim* in some ludicrous sketch, and in response to the old man's cries from the stage, "Ephraim! Ephraim! say boy, whar is you?" and I got up suddenly in the rear of the audience and shouted

back, "Hyar I is, boss!" — when this supreme moment arrived, and the crowd looked back surprised and laughed, the glow of conscious pride and artistic power that filled my heart was as genuinely agreeable as the thunders of applause that greet Booth or John McCullough when their admirers call them before the curtain after a great act.

I have only a dim recollection of my first introduction to the professional stage. The fairy spectacle of "Cherry and Fair Star" was running at a local theatre, with Robert McWade, of recent Rip Van Winkle fame, and Miss Wallace in the cast. By some good or bad fortune I happened to be loitering in the neighborhood of the back door of the theatre, when the captain of the supers called me and hired me at twenty-five cents a night to go on as imp in one of the spectacular scenes. I was on hand promptly, and shall never forget my wonder and astonishment at getting a first glimpse of the secrets of the stage. It was almost pitch dark when the back door was entered, and there was nothing in the place at all suggestive of the glamour that the foot-lights throw upon the scene. Huge clouds of black canvas rose upon all sides, and men and boys in the dirtiest of workday clothes were the only persons met. The noise of hammer and saw rose on various sides, and it seemed as if the stage had not been one-half prepared for the play that the curtain would ring up on within an hour. The dressing-room in which fifty or sixty boys were arraying themselves looked like the interior of a costume establishment after a cyclone had passed through it. But when all were dressed, and the fairies and the goblins assembled in the "wings," and the foot-lights were turned up and the orchestra outside was rattling through some inspiring air, the small boy in impish raiment was im-

mediately wrapt into a seventh heaven of delight. There was a multitude of girls in very low-necked and short dresses with glowing flesh-colored tights that seemed such inadequate covering for the rounded limbs that blushing was inevitable. The bright colors in their cheeks, the blackly outlined eyes and the blonde wigs added to the interest of the new charms. Every bit of glorious color in the gorgeous scenery appeared to flash out amid the flood of light. I ran against every variety of demon that was ever known to M. D. Conway, and was pushed out of the way of a hundred persons only to find myself obstructing somebody else's progress. The magnificent revelations of that night filled me with awe and astonishment for many a week afterward. It was the only night I appeared as an imp, for I had accepted the engagement without parental knowlege or consent, and when they learned of my success they at once put a decided and impressive veto upon any further efforts in the direction of the professional stage.

That first experience was not, of course, as abundant in opportunities for observation as later experiences have been. The world behind the foot-lights — the mimic world as it is called — is a realm of the most startling and pleasing kind. Not only is there food for wonder in what the eye falls upon, but the people who furnish the fun for the world are often among themselves as prolific of pleasantry as if they expected the applause of a full house to follow their jokes. They say and do the strangest things, and for a visitor who is investigating the mysteries of their surroundings, often make the time as lively and the surroundings as enjoyable as it is possible for really clever and good-natured people to do. The best time to go behind the scenes is during the engagement of a

6 BELLE HOWITT IN "BLACK CROOK." (73)

burlesque or comic opera company, and I will introduce the reader to a happy crowd of this kind that I once found myself in.

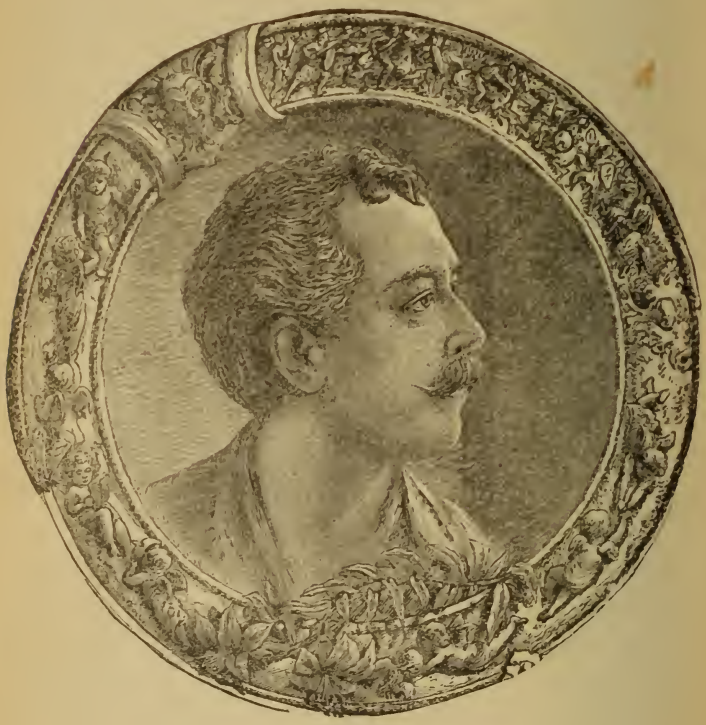
In 1879 the Kiralfys brought out their spectacular burlesque entitled "A Trip to the Moon," and I had the pleasure, during its run, of dropping in behind the scenes of a Western theatre one night to have a peep at the pictures there presented. Now, the moon is something like two hundred and eighty thousand miles from here — that is the one reputed to be made of green cheese, and having phases as numerous as the occasions that ring the April skies with rainbows. But the Kiralfys' moon was in another firmament, shining out amid stars that, when they wink their twinkling eyes or shuffle their shining feet, as they do frequently, the celestial shiners have got to put on their cloud ulsters, and sit down while the lachrymose eyes of the heavens give up their tears. That is why it was raining torrents the night I went behind the scenes with Mr. Bolossy Kiralfy. As I went in the back door *Prof. Microscope*, one of the funny characters in the play, brushed by with a telescope under his arm that was large enough to put Lord Ross's famous spy-glass into its vest pocket, if it had one. The moon to which the trip was to be made was not so far as two hundred and eighty thousand miles by a half block or so, but it was a very funny world, full of gaslight and laughter, and with the most mirthful sports imaginable on its glowing surface. I was inclined somewhat to lunar ways, and thinking like a great many other credulous mortals, that the trans-atmospheric trip was really made in a cartridge-built coach that was fired out of a huge mortar at the rate of about eighteen thousand six hundred and sixty-six and two-thirds miles a minute, had fully made up my mind to

ride on the roof or cow-catcher of the concern, at whatever risks to life and limb space might abound in. I expected to find something like a solid space-annihilating Columbiad behind the scenes, but I was somewhat mistaken.

Just before the curtain was rung up I found myself in the midst of the fairy world upon which the brilliancy of the foot-light falls. While the curtain was still down, and before the gasman had opened the flood-gates of splendor, the place was dark; not pitch dark, but pretty dark, compared with the brilliancy that shown in, over, and around its space a few minutes later. And then its intricacies, pieces of scenery here, various properties there, and sections of everything and anything scattered anywhere and everywhere, made a fellow feel as if the place was darker than it really was. Glittering and glowing as the stage appears before the foot-lights; wonderfully romantic as are its shades and lights, its love and laughter; and astounding as are its scenic effects; its area and surroundings are terribly realistic when the foot-lights are left behind, and the "business" of a play is once laid bare. Here the sighs of love-sick maidens and the spooning of gilt-edged but uncourageous wooers, the tears of injured innocence and the self-gratulations of hard-hearted villains who still pursue the flying female, the prattle of young mouths and the mumblings of "old men" and "old women," are lost with the departed scenes of the play in the unceasing desire of the actors to get back into their proper social and friendly relations to each other, and, once the prompter's book is closed, stage talk and stage manner are under metaphoric lock and key, and romance is for a while at an end.

On opera bouffe or burlesque nights, however, a

great deal of the stage charm clings to the characters even when off the stage, and one is compelled to be interested in the grotesqueness of those to be met in the side scenes — the odd and often pretty creatures who stand, sit, lie or lean around in the "wings" at



JNO. A. STEVENS.

their own sweet leisure and pleasure. There is something so indescribably funny in the costumes, in the facial make-up, and all that, of the happy opera-bouffer or festive burlesquer, that the eye follows a quaint character through the scenes with the same inalienable

interest as that with which the small boy hovers around the heels of an Italian with a hand-organ and a monkey. The eye, however, must not, cannot linger or languish long upon a single one of these walking wardrobes. There is a moving panorama constantly in front of the surprised vision, and before an electric flash could photograph one single individual in his droll toggery there would be a dozen or more "shassaying" before the camera.

There was leaning against one of the "wings" a *naive* and sprightly piece of feminine beauty, set off in the handsomest and most enticing manner in the world by a well-rounded, gracefully curved pair of pink tights, a white satin surtout and mantelet, plentifully besprent with glittering braid and flashing beads, dainty silk slippers that would have made a Chinese princess weep with envy, and a jaunty white hat to match. She was, of course, to figure as the charming little hero of the evening, if burlesques can be said to have such things as heroes. A doughty old chap, with bristling hair and a porcupine moustache, was standing by talking to little pink tights. He was gotten up like a circus poster in forty colors, with a plentiful array of red on his head and legs and a sort of sickly-looking, rainbow-sandwich built about his body. Red, blue and black streaks straying over his features made it appear as if he might have been assigned the role of an ogre and was accustomed to nightly look around for his fair companion to make a meal of her. I immediately made friends with the comic horror and the little lady in pink tights and learned who and what they were. The latter was (in the play, of course) a nobby young blood known as *Prince Caprice*, personated by Miss Alice Harrison; the red-legged comedian was *King Pin*, the young *Prince's*

funny father and Mr. Louis Harrison was hidden under the remarkable royal disguise.

"Well, when are we going to start for the moon?" I asked, good-humoredly.

"In a few fleeting moments," was the regal doughbelly's reply.

"And are all these folks going into the projectile?" pointing to the crowd of curious characters passing and repassing us.

"Not if the court knows herself and she thinks she does," put in the *Prince*, pertly; "only the *King*, *Prof. Microscope* and myself ride in the cab."

Prof. Microscope was a long, scrawny fellow. He was twirling a shaggy moustache and buzzing a handsome and not at all bashful ballet girl at the same time, a short distance away. He was gotten up in a blue-striped, swallow-tail coat, long enough, if the *Professor* cared about lending or renting it out, to be used for a streamer on the City Hall flagstaff, and short enough in the back to have the waist-buttons constantly challenging the collar to a prize fight or wrestling match. Very tight black pants, a luxuriantly frilled shirt front, fluted cuffs, and white hair allowed to grow to the length worn by Buffalo Bill, completed his outfit. When I was introduced to him, the *Professor* swore by the bones of Copernicus's grandmother on a volume of patent office reports that he was the sole originator and engineer of the only direct moon line, and he'd bet his boots or eat his hat that it never took more than fifteen minutes to make the trip.

"You see," said *King Pin*, "that *Microscope* is a queer fellow — not a coney man, you mind."

"Although," said the *Prince*, "he now and then casts his lot on the turn of the die."

LILLIE WEST. (79)

"Yes, his lot of last year's clothing," the jolly *King* remarked, "on the turn of the dyer."

This effort resulted in six of the supers, who were gotten up in voluminous dominoes with elaborate, but inexpensive, pasteboard trimmings, and who were within hearing distance, falling stiff and stark to the stage.

"Does this kind of thing occur often?" I inquired.

"Oh," growled the *Professor*, "that gag was stuffed and on exhibition at the Centennial. It was found in an Indian mound near Memphis, and is old."

And so the talk went on for a while, when up went the curtain and *King Pin* leaping on the stage amidst the laughter and plaudits of the house, told how the pretty *Prince Caprice* had tired of mundane things and was heavily sighing for the fountain-head of the lambent silvery moonlight. *Microscope*, who was at the head of the Royal College of Astronomers, was besought to do something to aid the *Prince* in accomplishing the journey to Merrie Moonland, and in a neat speech unfolded his plans for a grand dynamo-etherial line that would speedily carry the *Prince* to the wished-for happy Land of Luna.

Then came the glorious moment when the flight moonwards was to be made. I hurried around to the prompter's side of the stage where I saw the mouth of the huge cannon gaping, and got there as they were about to fire it. Imagine my surprise to find the extraordinary piece of ordnance made entirely of pasteboard, a substance that a few grains of gunpowder would blow into as many pieces as the leaves of Vallambrosia. Still the passengers were to be fired out of this contrivance, and I felt that if they and the cannon could stand it, it was none of my business. It had all been explained to the audience, that *King Pin*, *Prince Caprice* and *Prof. Microscope* were the only three per-

sons to be given seats in the cartridge-cab in which the wonderful journey was to be made. The question therefore naturally arose, what was to become of the multitude of characters that crowded the "wings." There were "supers" in black, yellow and mottled dominoes with high *papier-maché* casques, and huge ear-trimmings that reminded one of the flaps that decorate the sides of a Chicago girl's head, or the sails of a lake lumberman. There were star-gazers with zodiacal garments and tin telescopes, all set off by great pairs of soda-bottle-lens eye-glasses, that gave them the air of a Secchi, or somebody else of astronomical aspect. There were guards who shouldered tooth brushes made entirely of wood, with index hands surmounting the tops of their chapeaux and serving to indicate that their intellects had gone moon-hunting; and there were other creatures, among them, horrible genii, who started for the moon by some short route across lots and got there long before the regular excursionists.

But the corps de ballet! It was everything but a beauty. If there is anything likely to strike a theatre-goer as ludicrous, it is an awkward squad of overgrown girls, with gauze-garnished limbs and dissipated-looking blonde wigs. A precocious ballet-debutante is a bit of Dead-Sea fruit shot backward off Terpischore's head, and if the bullet does not lay Terpsichore herself out in a first-class undertaker's style it is because Terpsichore happens to be in terribly good luck. These reflections were suggested by a sight of the intermingling danseuses that kept pretty well in the rear of the stage. You could tell the height to which each one could safely fling her foot on looking at her. The girl who was making her first appearance had not yet gotten over her splayfootedness, and every time

she took a peep at the audience and began to realize the airiness of her costume and gawkiness of her manners, her knees knocked together fast enough to keep a few notes ahead of her chattering teeth. And her dress! there was nothing marvellous about it — nothing that would carry a person off into the ideal financial realms of a national debt. It was powerfully plain with a stiff and provoking effort at showiness. The next line, who also may be classed as figurantes, are plainly to be distinguished by their natty air of sauciness and a noticeable clipping-off of the superabundant clothing that encumbers the latest additions to the corps. The coryphees, though, are radiant in glittering, close-fitting silver mail, and there is acquired grace in their actions, and a high haughtiness in the toss of their heads. The premieres everybody understands and recognizes, who has once seen them pirouette on their toes or slam around in a wild ecstasy of dancing delight that would give anybody else a vertigo and lead to numerous and possibly serious dislocations. Well, all these were whispering or prattling together, in the way of the scene-shifters, who went around reckless of their language, with sleeves rolled up and anxious faces and questioning eyes turned upon all whom they encountered there. It struck me, as I gazed upon this almost naked and highly interesting ballet, that if the moon had no atmosphere, as those who know best claim, the costumes of these gay and giddy girls were airy enough to stock it with a pretty extensive and healthy one. Out of this jumble of scenery and from the midst of these jostling characters the start was made for the moon. There was no carriage, no cartridge, no load in the cannon. Her trip as a trip was a most undisguised and diaphanous fraud. While *King Pin*, the

ADAH ISAAC MENKEN. (83)

Prince, the *Professor*, and the rest were arranging themselves in a happy tableau behind the second "flat" bang! went a gun fired by one of the supers, across the stage flew several "dummies" or stuffed figures in the direction of the roof, the scene opened and lo the jolly crowd were in Moonland. *King Pin*, *Prince Caprice* and *Microscope* were there together, as fresh and fair as if they were accustomed to making two-hundred-and-eighty-thousand-mile trips. The monarch of the moon, *King Kosmos* (W. A. Mestayer), after having summoned his retinue of Selenites — the same long-robed, pillow-stomached and pasteboard-eared crew who had died behind the scenes a few minutes before from an over-stroke of punning — and having things explained to everybody's satisfaction, came forward and fell on the several necks of the terrestrial visitors, was punched in the paunch, by the *King*, enough times to set all the Moonites into roars of laughter, and then they all joined in stretching their necks and rasping their throats in a welcoming chorus to their guests.

It was unfortunate for the visitors that *King Kosmos* had a beautiful little princess of a daughter called *Fantasia* (Miss Gracie Plaisted), with a voice that rippled and rolled in music, earthly as the bulbul's notes and celestial as the songs of the spheres; and, of course, foolish little *Caprice* had to go and fall in love with her and sing innumerable sweet songs to her, all of which only got poor old *Pin* and his friends into all sorts of trouble. This they finally managed to get out of by returning to mother earth in a gorgeously-appointed flying ship, as grand as Cleopatra's galley. Before decamping, however, Moonland was visited in every part, and its gardens of silver-tinged foliage, its crystal palaces, that made pale Luna's light more bril-

liant still, its icy mountains with mass of frostage, in and about which the ballet wound in the graceful rhythm of "Les Flocons de Niege," were all taken in,

MILLIE LA FONTE.

and notwithstanding an occasional hitch in getting the panorama around, everything in this new and gleaming sphere was really glorious for a first-night visit.

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE DRESSING-ROOM

These same people who appear grotesque, and out of the pale of ordinary every-day existence on the stage, are nearly always the most unromantic and realistic-looking folks in the world when you meet them on the street. The extraordinary metamorphosis they go through to arrive at an appearance suitable for presentation before the foot-lights is a secret of the dressing-room. In the privacy of this carefully guarded apartment street clothes are laid aside, and what is more wonderful still, faces, eyes, and hands and lower limbs, too, very frequently, are subjected to processes that produce the most remarkable results. Anybody who has seen Nat Goodwin, of "Hobbies" reputation, will readily understand that it takes a pretty extensive transformation to change his appearance from that of the man to that of *Prof. Pygmalion Whiffles*, the eccentric character that makes "Hobbies" the laughable and popular play that it is. Mr. Goodwin is young — not more than twenty-four — but I saw him slip out of his youthfulness into the bald-headed, red-wigged and merry old professor one night in almost as short a time as it takes a boy to fall through a four-story elevator shaft. I accompanied him to his dressing-room one night. He had just a few minutes to get ready, and was in proper shape in time to make his appearance at the upper entrance, amid the crash that always accompanies his first appearance in the play,

BALLET GIRLS DRESSING-ROOM.

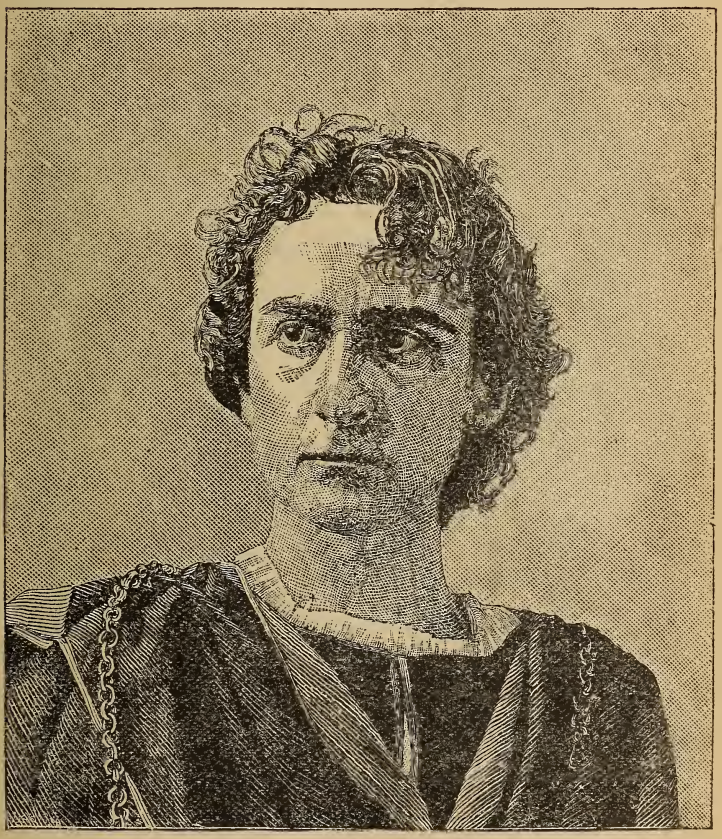
and gives him an opportunity to make some remarks about *Maj. Bang's* dog, which has ripped his "ulster"

up the back. Well, Goodwin went to work the moment he was inside the door. Off came the every-day clothes, and in a jiffy on went the one white and black stocking that will be remembered by all who have seen "Hobbies." The shirt, coat, pantaloons, linen duster and hat that forms the rest of his toilet, were carefully laid upon a side table. The shirt was flapped over his head in a second, the pantaloons went on like lightning and then bending towards a looking-glass he dipped his fingers in red and black color boxes, and soon had the necessary painting done upon his face. The velvet coat followed the making-up of the face; then the torn linen duster, finally the red wig with its charming bald spot, was clapped upon his head; the white hat was gracefully tilted over it, and with a call to the man who played *Arthur Doveleigh* for his cane and an "I'll see you later" to his visitor, he bounded up the stairs, and the next moment, as I left the stage door, I could hear the hand-clapping and the howls of delight with which a crowded house was greeting their favorite.

The great value of the art of making-up, as the preparation for participation in a play is called, both in the matter of painting the face and costuming, will be understood when the story told by Maze Edwards, who was Edwin Booth's manager during the tour of 1881–2, is recited. * * * The company got to Waterbury, Connecticut, ahead of their baggage. When the hour for the performance arrived the baggage, consisting of all their costumes and paraphernalia was still missing. The manager was in a terrible plight; but I will let him tell his own story as he told it to a newspaper reporter a short time after the occurrence.

"When I found the baggage, with the costumes,

had not arrived," said Edwards, "I was just going to throw myself into the river. Then I thought I would go and tell Mr. Booth about it and bid good-bye to some of the people who had always thought a good deal of me, before killing myself. To my astonish-



EDWIN BOOTH.

ment Mr. Booth took it as coolly as you would take an invitation to drink. He said, inasmuch as the people were in the hall, he would make a few remarks to them

about the accident, and then they would go on and play three acts of "Hamlet" in the clothes they had on. And so it was fixed up that way. Well, the thought of *Hamlet* in a short-tailed coat and light pants almost made me sick, and when Mr. Booth came upon the stage, looking like an Episcopal minister, with a Knight Templar's cheese knife that he borrowed, I couldn't think of anything but *Hamlet*. I forgot all about his clothes, and I believe if he had only had on a pair of sailor's pants and a red flannel fireman's shirt that the people would only have seen *Hamlet*. I tell you he is the greatest actor that ever lived. The people sat perfectly still, and seemed wrapped up in Booth. That is, they were when they did not look at the other fellows. But when they took *Laertes*, with a short, ham-fat coat on, a pair of lah-de-dah pants and a pan-cake hat, it seemed to me I could hear them smile. And the *King*, *Hamlet's* step-father, he was a sight. Imagine a king with a cut-away checkered coat, a Pullman car blanket thrown over his shoulder for a robe, and a leg of a chair for a sceptre, mashed on a queen with a travelling dress and a gray woollen basque with buttons on it. And think of *Polonius*, with a linen duster and a straw hat with a blue ribbon on. Oh, it made me tired. *Ophelia* was all right enough. She had on some crazy clothes that she had been travelling in, and we got some straw out of a barn and some artificial flowers off the bonnets, and she pulled through pretty well. But the *Ghost!* You would have died to have seen the *Ghost*. He had on one of those long hand-me-down ulster overcoats with a buckle on the back as big as a currycomb and the belt was hanging down on both sides. The boys got him a green mosquito bar to put over it, and with a stuffed club for a sceptre, he fell over a chair and then

came on. I should have laughed if I had been on my death-bed when he said to *Hamlet*, 'I am thy father's ghost!' He looked more like a drummer for a wholesale confectionery house, with a sort of tin skimmer

M'KEE RANKIN.

on his head, and I believe the audience would have gone wild with laughter if it had not been for Mr. Booth. I don't believe you could get him to laugh on the stage for a million dollars. He just looked at the *Ghost* as though it was a genuine one, and the audience

looked at Booth, and forgot all about the ulster and the *Ghost's* pants being rolled up at the bottom. It was probably the greatest triumph that an actor ever had for Mr. Booth to compel the vast audience to forget the ludicrous surroundings and think only of the character he was portraying. I wouldn't have missed the night's performance for a thousand dollars, and when, at 10 o'clock, I heard the boys getting the trunks up-stairs, I was almost sorry. The last two acts were played with the costumes, but they were no better performed than the first. Still, I think, on the whole, I had rather the baggage would be there. It makes a manager feel better."

In the olden times, and in the days of the early American theatre, the dressing-rooms were beneath the stage, and were by no means the perfect and cozy places that are to be found in existence at present. Hodgkinson, I think it was, who, during the last century built the first theatre having dressing-rooms above and upon the stage. Later improvement has removed the dressing-rooms, in first-class houses, entirely from the stage, ample and neatly-furnished rooms being provided in adjoining buildings. This change has been necessitated by the demand made upon theatrical managers for greater stage room and better opportunities than they had heretofore in keeping up with the growing taste for extensive scenic representations with magnificent appointments. The star of a company, male or female, always has the best dressing-room the establishment affords, and it is generally very close to the green-room. Minor performers share their rooms; and the captain of the supers usually has an apartment beneath the stage where he gathers his Roman mob, or marshals his mail-clad but awkward squad of warriors. No better burlesque upon this ill-clothed,

dirty-faced, knock-kneed and ridiculous theatrical contingent has ever been presented either in type or on the stage, than the character of the Roman Lictor created by Louis Harrison in San Francisco, and after-

THE THREE VILLAS.

wards relegated to another performer in "Photos." The story is told that Harrison having been cast for the part of a lictor in a tragedy in which John McCul-

lough took the leading role, he grew offended, having higher aspirations than mere utility business, and determined to make the part funny and, if possible, spoil the scene. When he came on the stage, he was in war-paint, his face strewn with gory colors and intermingling black; he had on the dirtiest costume he could find, with a battered rusty helmet, and carried the insignia of his office so awkwardly, while his knees came together his toes turned in, and his general attitude was that of a man in the third week of a hard spree. He brought the house down, spoiled the play and was discharged for making too much of a success of the part. But this is a digression, and we must hurry back to the dressing-room.

The most difficult part of the actor's work preliminary to going on the stage is to make-up his face. By the judicious use of powder and paint, and a proper disposition of wigs, beard, etc., the oldest man may be made to assume juvenility and the youngest to seem to bend with the weight of years. Wigs are to a great extent reliable, but the old fashioned false beard is clumsy and apt to make the wearer feel dissatisfied with himself and the rest of the world. But the old fashioned beard is going out of style, and gray wool stuck on the face with grease is generally used. I can recall vividly how a beard of this sort worn by poor George Conly, the basso, while singing the part of *Gaspard* in "The Chimes of Normandy," while with the Emma Abbot troupe last season, struck me as the perfection of deception. It always requires a dresser to put on one of these beards in anything like a satisfactory manner.

An old actor of the "crushed" type who has been almost forced off the stage and into running a dramatic college, by the young and pushing element in

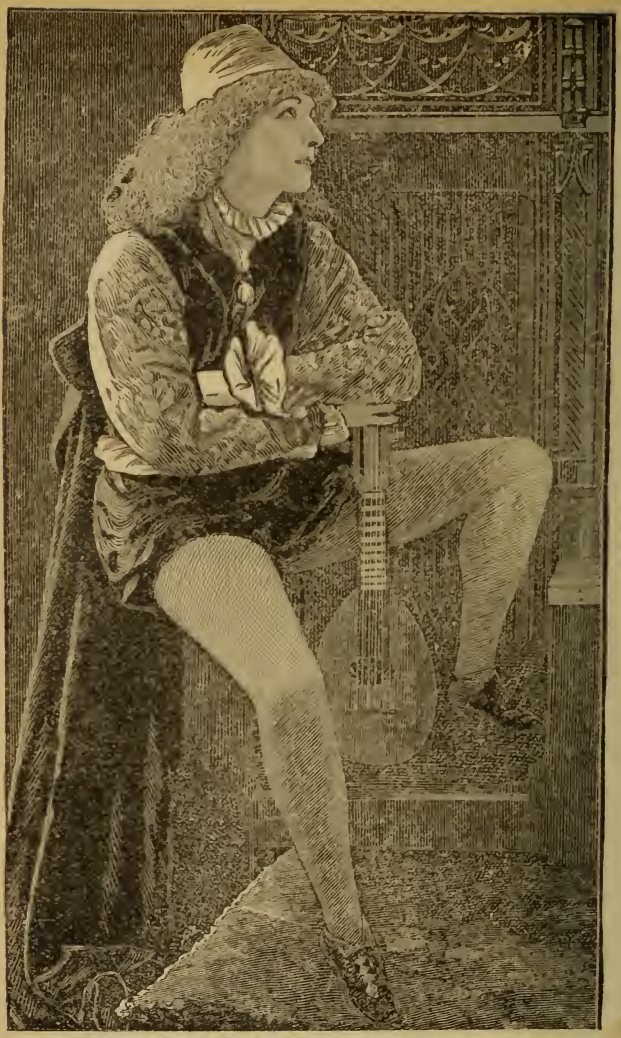
the profession, in an interview had with him lately in Philadelphia, remarked, as he looked with evident interest upon the crowds in the street: "I like to study faces. To my mind it is the most absorbing study in the world — that of men's faces. You see, the thing has more interest for me than for the run of men even in my profession, because I'm an enthusiast in a certain sense. I belong to the times when the study and make-up of faces was mighty important in the theatrical line. It wasn't such a long time ago, either; but the times have changed since then, until now there seems to be almost no effort at all to make-up and look your part.

"It must be a great deal of trouble to make up every night."

"Oh, but, my boy, look at the result! Go down to the theatre, where they still do it, and if only five years have elapsed between the acts, see how it is shown on every face on the stage."

"It is difficult to make-up well, is it not?"

"Well, no," said the actor, lighting a fresh cigar and assuming a more confidential pose, "the rules are simple enough, and with a little practice, almost any amateur could learn to make up artistically if he has any eye for effect. Some parts, like *Romeo*, *Charles Surface*, *Sidney Darrell* or *Claude Melnotte*, require very little make up for a young and good-looking actor. The face and neck should be thoroughly covered with white powder, and the cheek bones and chin lightly touched with rouge, which should not be too red. Then, as the lover ought to look handsome, he should draw a fine black line under his lower eyelashes with a camel hair brush and burnt umber. This makes the eyes brilliant. I'm sure it isn't much trouble to make up that way."



SARAH BERNHARDT.

"Other characters are harder, though?"

"Oh, immeasurably so. But to make a maturer man, like *Cassio*, *Iago*, *Mercutio*, *John Midway* or

Hawksley, it requires only a little more work. After the actor has laid on his powder and rouged his face pretty heavily — for men are commonly rather red-faced — he must take his brush and umber and trace some lines from the outer corners of the eyes, and other lines down toward the corners of the mouth from the nose. In short, he must make the 'crows' feet that are visible in all men who have lived over thirty years in this tantalizing world of ours. Then the chin should be touched with a little blue powder, which makes it look as if recently shaved. These precautions will make the most juvenile face look mature. If he has to go further, and look like old age, as in such characters as *Lear*, *Virginius*, — for, as I said before, *Virginius*, was an old man, — *Richelieu*, *Sir Peter Teazle*, and so on, more work is necessary. Heavy false eyebrows must be pasted on, and the eye-hollow darkened and fairly crowded with lines. Wrinkles must be painted across the forehead, furrows down the cheeks, downward lines from the corners of the mouth, and (very important) three or four heavy wrinkles painted around the neck to give it the shriveled appearance common to old age. The hollow over the upper lip should be darkened, and also the hollow under the lower lip. This gives the mouth the pinched and toothless look. A little powdered antimony on the cheeks makes them look fallen in and shrunken. Then tone the face down with a delicate coating of pearl powder, and you'll have as old a looking man as you'd care to see."

"How does it feel?"

"At first your face feels tightened, and the muscles don't play easily, but after a few grimaces it comes out all right. It's a great relief to get off, however, after three hours' work."

"It must cause rather mournful forecasts when a man looks on his own face made up for the age of, say, eighty years."

"Not so bad as when he makes up for a corpse, however. I'll never forget the first glance I had at my face after it had been made up for *Gaston's* death scene, when playing the "Man of the Iron Mask," in '62. It positively appalled me, sir, and I lay awake all that night thinking of it, and dreamed of myself in a coffin for a month afterward."

"How is it done?"

"Well, it varies slightly. You see, such characters as *Lear*, *Virginius*, *Werner*, and *Beverly* are before the audience some time before they actually die, and therefore, their faces cannot be made very corpse-like; but *Mathias* in 'The Bells,' *Louis XI.*, *Gaston* and *Danny Mann* are discovered dying when the scene opens, or are brought in dead, so that their faces can be made extreme. For the last series the face and neck should be spread with prepared pink to give it a livid hue in places. Then put a deep shading of powdered antimony under the eyebrows and well into the hollow of the eye, on the cheeks, throat and temples. This is very effective, as it gives the face that dreadfully sunken appearance as in death. The sides of the nose and even the upper lip should also be darkened, and the lips powdered blue. Then the face will look about as dead as it would three hours after a real death."

"In the make up of grotesque faces do they use false noses and chins?"

"Very rarely. Usually the method is to stick some wool on the nose with a gum and mold it in whatever shape you will; then powder and paint it as you would the natural nose for grotesque or comedy parts. Paste

THE LATE ADELAIDE NEILSON. (99)

is put on with gum, instead of wool, sometimes. Clowns have to encase themselves fairly with whiting, and they find this trouble enough without building up noses or cheeks. Grotesque artists have to work hard with their faces as a rule, but they are often repaid by discovering neat points. Many of our best Dutch and Irish comedians owe their first lift to a lucky make-up."

"I suppose there are types of the representation of different nationalities?"

"Well, a gentleman is usually made-up the same, no matter where he may be supposed to belong, but the caricature is usually one of the well-known make-ups. A Frenchman has to be powdered with dark rouge, and has his eyebrows blackened with dark ink. All dark characters, as mulattoes, creoles, Spaniards, and so on, are done with whiting and dark rouge, with plenty of burnt cork and umber."

"Is much work necessary on the hands?"

"In witches it is of great importance that the hands and arms should be skinny and bony. This is usually done by a liberal powdering of Dutch pink, and painting between the knuckles with burnt umber. Painting between the knuckles, you see, makes them look large and bony. But this sounds a good deal like ancient history, now, does it not? The art is falling into disuse, my boy, and I've no doubt the time is not far off when we shall have youngsters playing old men with signs on their back reading, 'Please, sir, I'm eighty years old,' while their faces are as fresh as daisies."

"To what do you attribute this tendency."

"Laziness. The theatrical age of to-day is a wonder to me. The entire profession wants to star. An actor plays old men now simply for a living, while he

matures his plans for his contemplated starring tour. An actress does old women heavies or juveniles only until she can find a capitalist who will enable her to star, and none of them seem to take any pride in the minor parts. Hence, they don't take the trouble to make up artistically, and the stage is robbed of its chief charm — realism."

The looking-glass and the pots of paint and boxes of powder upon the shelves of the dressing-room are as important adjuncts of the play, and even more important, sometimes, than the huge boxes and trunks filled with costumes that are found in the same place. They hold their place amid the diamond necklaces and brilliant bracelets of the prima donna, the cheaper jewels of the dramatic artiste and the crowns of kings and helmets of warriors. Their power is great, and that power is fully recognized by all who are within the domain of dramatic art. And the actor or actress, the prima donna and the swell tenor, all generally make it their business to attend to their own beautification in this way themselves. Nearly all star actors carry male servants who are known as dressers, and all prominent actresses have maids who accompany them to the theatre and these help to complete the artiste's toilets. Formerly there were barbers and hair-dressers, as well as other specialists, attached to places of amusement, and whose business it was to shave an actor or dress a head of hair before the performance. Many establishments retain these yet, but they are not as numerous or as well-known as they were before the days of travelling combinations. Apropos the theatrical hair dresser there is quite an interesting story told. One of this class fell in love with a popular actress he was frequently called upon to beautify. He confessed his devouring passion on his knees and she laughed

DRESSING AN ACTRESS' HAIR.

him to scorn. More than that, she insisted on his continuing his ministrations to her and made him the butt of her heartless gibes while he was devoting himself to enhance her cruel loveliness. The iron entered his soul and he swore vengeance. One night, when he had to prepare her for a most important part, he surpassed himself in the splendor of her crowning decoration. Having finished he anointed her golden locks with a compound of a peculiarly fascinating aromatic odor, which so attracted his callous enslaver's notice that she asked him what it was.

"It is a mixture of my own, Madame," he replied. "I call it the last breath of love."

The actress remarked that she would call him a fool, and he bowed and withdrew. A few minutes later, when she appeared behind the footlights, instead of the roar of applause which she expected, she was hailed with a tempestuous scream of laughter. Her discarded lover had had his revenge. He had dyed her golden locks with a chemical which turned pea green as soon as it was dry. She dresses what hair she has left herself now, while he is boss of a five-cent shaving emporium, never speaks to any lady but his landlady, and has a Chinaman to do his washing.

If there is a ballet or a burlesque crowd or comic opera chorus in the theatre the scenes in their rooms will be of a more diversified nature. The girls in addition to making their faces pretty, must have their limbs so shapely that no fault can be found even by the most cavilling of the gentlemen who crowd up behind the orchestra while the house holds a host of female attractions. The rage for limb exhibitions rendered it necessary that some means should be devised to hide the calves or poorly turned ankles of the creatures whose limbs are displayed. Happily the

symmetricals, as padded tights are called, were hit upon and now you cannot find an unsightly piece of underpinning in any combination, and even the poor ballet girl who does page's parts or helps to make up a crowd for $6 a week, will, if she has sense and taste, go early to the dealer in theatrical goods and have symmetricals made to suit the exigencies of her case. These artistic accessories of feminine fictitiousness are leggings or tights woven in such a manner the thickness of a deficient thigh, the pipe-stem character of a calf, are filled out with silk and cotton into shapefulness and beauty that Venus de Medici herself would not be ashamed to make a display of. I heard a story about an operatic artist who for a long time refused to play parts demanding the exhibition even of a fraction of a limb, and all because her lower members were too attenuated to attract anything else but ridicule. Lately she has found her way to the pad-maker's and now can present as pretty an ankle and as round a calf to the audience as sister artists who have more flesh and blood in their composition. Men as well as women patronize the pad-maker and any actor of the mashing persuasion who may have had to keep his bandy legs in wide pantaloons heretofore can now burst forth upon the sight of his adored in all the gorgeous loveliness and perfection of an attractive anatomy.

MARIE ROZE.

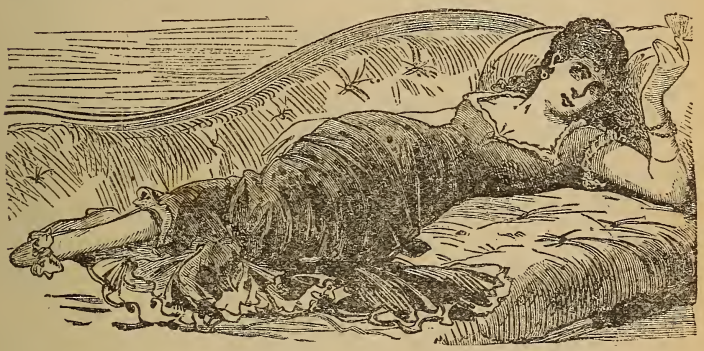
CHAPTER VIII.

WITHIN THE WINGS.

The green-room, except where stock companies prevail — and there are not more than three or four in the

United States now — has passed out of the shadow of the rigorous rules that sometime ago were posted here, and that had to be observed. By this I do not mean

that rules have been entirely done away with behind the scenes; but travelling companies are governed by their own rules, carry their own stage manager, prompter, etc., and the only persons that local green-room rules could apply to now-a-days would be the four or five poorly paid young girls who, in their desire to go on the stage and become stars, start and generally stay at the bottom of the ladder, where they are paid pitiful salaries and continue to "mash" wandering minstrels, or the equally poorly paid and badly treated members of some male chorus. These girls usually spend the lengthy leisure a performance gives them sitting de-



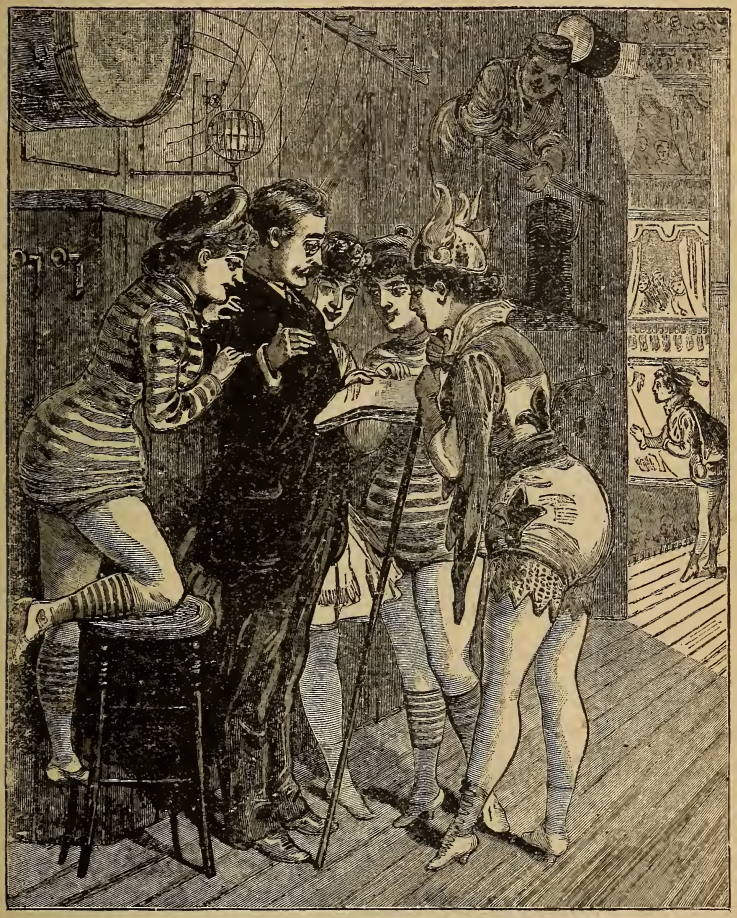
A GREEN-ROOM TABLEAU.

murely on chairs in the corner of the green-room until the call-boy sends them word that they are needed to fill up some silent gap in the entertainment. Beyond these there are few to be found in the green-room during a performance. Occasionally an actor will drop in to pace the floor as he mumbles his lines over, or an actress, who is tired from standing in the wings, or on the stage, will hurry in and drop to rest on the sofa. The side scenes, or "wings," as they are termed, are the places in which to find almost everybody who has any business around the stage of a theatre. Under

the stage, in a "music-room," the musicians may be found when they are not harassing the audience with some unanimously discordant air.

Gathered together in the entrances and within easy call of the prompter, whose business it has recently become to mind everybody else's business, are the performers, male and female mingling together, waiting for their cue to go on. The absence of chairs makes it necessary for all to remain on their feet, and only when a friendly "property" that may be used for sedentary purposes is within reach will a weary actor or actress take possession of it. Enough has been said already about the general aspect of affairs behind the scenes and the groupings in the green-room. Now, let us turn our attention to some of the individuals and incidents of this remarkable little world. The stage prompter is, probably, as important a gentleman as we could first run against. The prompter stands at his desk at one side of the stage, with a book of the play before him during the entire performance. It is his business to furnish the players with their lines when memory fails them. He must be quick to give the performer the exact word that has thrown him off the track, and just as soon as an actor or actress looks appealingly towards him he knows what it means — that the performer is "stuck" — and he must run to their aid at once. His position is almost as responsible as that of the prompter in the Japanese theatre, who goes from one actor to the other, during the whole performance, and, with a lantern placed up against the play-book, reads off the lines which the actor is expected to repeat. He must be at the theatre during the morning rehearsals; and he also writes out parts; changes of scenes; makes lists of the properties or articles needed; and altogether, his position is nothing

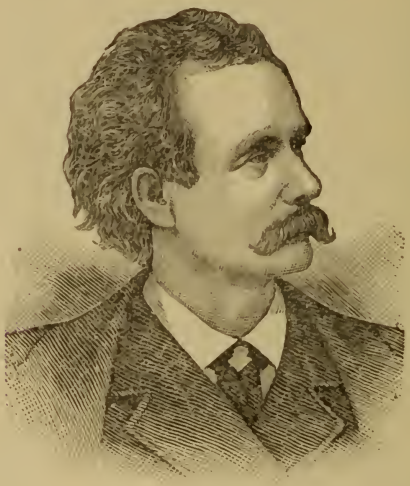
like a sinecure. A rule of the theatre, that in many places, has glided quietly out of existence, is to the effect that nobody must lounge in the prompter's



GETTING THEIR "LINES."

corner. But they do. Many a fairy queen, with shining raiment and powerful wand, loiters around to catch a glimpse of the few lines she has to speak,

while darling little princes in the nicest of tights, or pirates, or bandits, with symmetrical limbs fully displayed, and the softest of hearts beating under their corsets, get alongside of him, and because they have had little parts to memorize, and have let them slip lightly and swiftly beyond their recollection, tease the prompter to help them regain the lost words.



MILTON NOBLES.

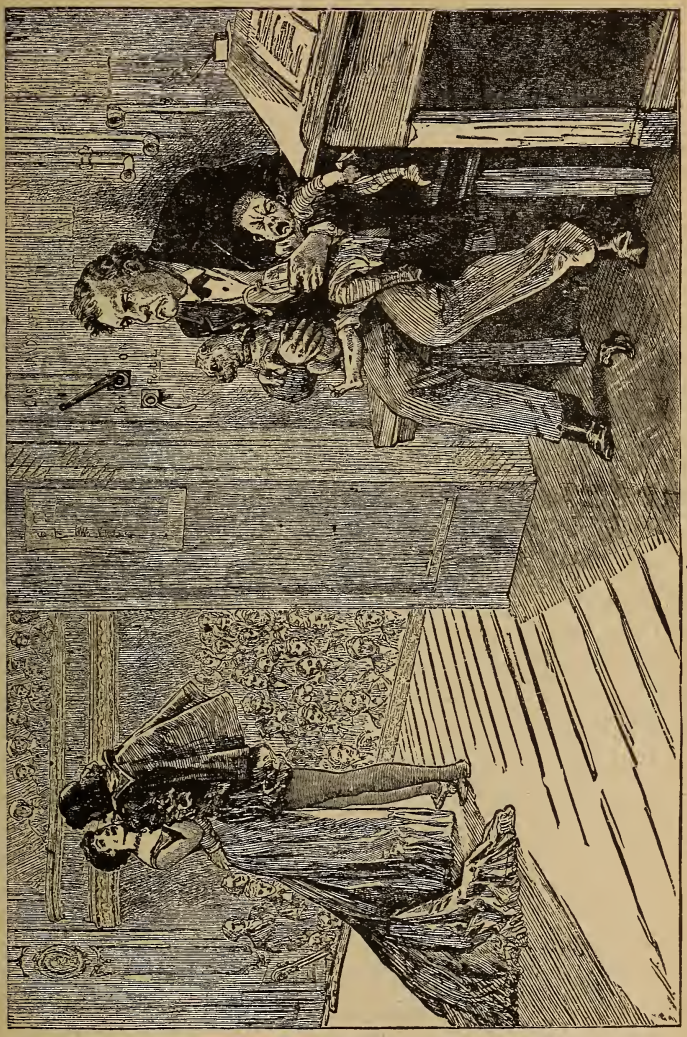
A veteran prompter, who has evidently seen a great deal of the world beyond the foot-lights, in giving his reminiscences, said– "Some actors boast that they never stick. No matter if they have totally forgotten their lines, they 'say something,' as they phrase it, and I have never seen the difference noted by the audience yet. Once, while I was making the rounds of the Pacific coast, twenty years or so ago, I went to see a performance of 'Macbeth,' by the company of a

friend of mine in San Francisco. It was a tough company, a band of regulation old-time barn stormers, and the fellow who played *Macbeth* was so far gone in the dreamy vacancy of whiskey that he 'gagged' his part more than once in the first scene. Finally, in the middle of his second, he was also dead lost. He hesitated, but only for a moment. Then he threw his arms around *Lady Macbeth's* waist, and drawing her to him, coolly said: 'Let us retire, dearest chuck, and con this matter over in a more sequestered spot, far from the busy haunts of men. Here the walls and doors are spies, and our every word is echoed far and near. Come, then, let's away! False heart must hide, you know, what false heart dare not show.' They made their exit in a roar of applause, and I thought, 'There's a man who has no use for a prompter, sure enough.'

"All actors are not like him, however. Raw actors are the prompter's horror. The debutante is another. She will forget every line the moment she strikes the stage, and be so nervous, moreover, that she will not be able to repeat those the prompter reads to her. I remember one young lady who thought she had a mission to play *Juliet*. She made her appearance, supported by a country company, and lost every line, as usual. We prompted her through her first scene, somehow. When the balcony scene was on, her mother stood on the ladder behind her, reading her speeches word for word, which she repeated after her. But the old lady was a heavy weight, and the step-ladder was no longer in the flower of youth; so, in the middle of the farewell, it gave way. The old lady was tumbled forward against the ricketty staging of the balcony, and it fell against the set piece that masked it in from the audience. So *Juliet*, mother, balcony, and all toppled

IMPROVING SPARE MOMENTS.

down on *Romeo*, and by the time he was taken from



AN ACTRESS' USEFUL HUSBAND.

the wreck he was as mournful a lover as the play makes him out to be."

Looking around among the players again we find a

fairy leaning up against some object with her lithe limbs crossed, and she putting in the spare time allowed her in doing crochet or some kindred work. Perhaps she is knitting a purse for some distant lover, or maybe it is a tiny pair of socks for the little baby that is waiting for her at home. For many of these youthful, charming, and heart-breaking fairies and fair burlesquers are married, and frequently their husbands are in the same company. A story is told of a well-known and popular actress who brings her husband with her to the theatre every night, and while the old man — a dear, innocent and uncomplaining old fellow sits in the side scenes nursing baby with a bottle, on one knee, and holding an English pug on the other, while the mother is out before the admiring public throwing her arms about some strange *Romeo*, and clinging to him with all the warmth and affection of the fair *Juliet's* young love.

The story is told of a New York fireman, who made real love, and too much of it, on the stage. According to the rules of the fire department there, a member of the department is kept on duty at every performance in the theatres. While there he has nothing to do except respond to any call of fire, and give his valuable services in suppressing it. But it is very seldom that his services are called into requisition, and consequently the position at the theatre is much sought after by the gallant fire laddies. As a rule, the members of the department are a fine body of men, but those detailed at the theatres are very fine-looking and consequently very popular with the actresses at the theatres. The natural result is that the fireman soon has a "mash," and having unrestricted liberties perambulates through the building without hindrance. Becoming well acquainted with the nooks and corners he is en-

MAKING LOVE IN THE SIDE-SCENES. (115)

abled to snatch a few moments' sweet converse with the object of his affections, and in a place where they can commune with one another uninfluenced by the presence of anyone. But recently the regular disappearance of the fireman of a certain theatre at a stated time became the subject of comment among the attaches, and another female admirer of the gallant fireman, actuated possibly by jealous motives, watched him receding from view and followed his footsteps silently. In an unfrequented nook among the ruins of ancient mountains, pillars and broad fields — on canvas — stood the object of her disappointed affections, embracing the fair form of her rival and giving vent to the pent-up feelings of his heart, while she, coy, and dove-like, stood, blushingly receiving the compliments which were being showered upon her. This was too much for the slighted fair one, and the place that knew the loving hearts for many evenings is now vacant and ready for the occupancy of another loving couple.

Another fire lad of the same department thought he smelt fire one night just before the performance began. He pried around through every nook and corner in the fulfilment of his duty, and at last was satisfied that he had found the place. He was not sufficiently well posted to know that he had located the incipient blaze in one of the ladies' dressing-rooms. So in he popped without giving any warning. The girls were dressing for the ballet and already one of them was in condition to get into her symmetricals. Imagine the consternation of the girls at sight of the apparition in blue clothes, cap, and brass buttons. They hastily got behind towels and other articles within reach and set up a screech that came near creating a panic among the audience. The fire boy did not wait to find the origin of the smoke, and it took all the persuasive powers of

the manager and company to keep the girls from swear-

M'LLE GERALDINE AND LITTLE GERRY.

ing out warrants for burglary or something of that kind against the luckless laddie.

There are a great many other ludicrous things that

have happened behind the scenes, and but few of which have reached the public. The legend about Atkins Lawrence's lion skin, which he wears when he plays *Ingomar*, and which was so heavily sprinkled with snuff as a preservative against moths that when *Parthenia* began to woo the barbarian chief and leant lovingly upon his shoulder she almost sneezed her head off before the alarmed audience, is told of Mary Anderson. The Milwaukee *Sun* printed something about the same actress, that whether true or false is equally good. The writer says: — "It is well known that Miss Anderson is addicted to the gum-chewing habit, and that when she goes upon the stage she sticks her chew of gum on an old castle painted on the scenery. There was a wicked young man playing a minor part in the play who had been treated scornfully by Mary, as he thought, and he had been heard to say he would make her sick. He did. He took her chew of gum and spread it out so it was as thin as paper, then placed a chew of tobacco inside, neatly wrapped it up, and stuck it back on the old castle. Mary came off, when the curtain went down, and going up to the castle she bit like a bass. Putting the gum, which she had no idea was loaded, into her mouth, she mashed it between her ivories and rolled it as a sweet morsel under her tongue. It is said by those who happened to be behind the scenes, that when the tobacco began to get in its work there was the worst transformation scene that ever appeared on the stage. The air, one supe said, seemed to be full of fine cut tobacco and spruce gum, and Mary stood there and leaned against a painted rock, a picture of homesickness. She was pale about the gills, and trembled like an aspen leaf shaken by the wind. She was calm as a summer's morning, and while concealment like a worm in

an apple, gnawed at her stomach, and tore her corset strings, she did not upbraid the wretch who had smuggled the vile pill into her countenance. All she said, as she turned her pale face to the painted ivy on the rock, and grasped a painted mantel piece with her left hand, as her right hand rested on her heaving stomach, was, 'I die by the hand of an assassin.' Women can't be too careful where they put their gum."

Actors are not fonder of or indulge more in liquor than any other class. Occasionally you will find a member of the profession whose passion for the ardent will lead him far enough to disappoint the public. Joe Emmet's indiscretions in this direction gave him world-wide notoriety, and for this reason only do I mention them here. He is a favorite everywhere and for that reason the entire public regretted his one fault among so many agreeable virtues. But Joe has occasioned many comical situations in the side scenes while actors and manager were plying him with seltzer, bromide of potassium and other soberatives in order to get him to begin or finish a play, when there was a jammed house waiting to applaud him at every turn in "Fritz." But Emmet has crossed the Rubicon again and once more his worldful of friends rejoice in his happiness and growing fortune. He is not the only one in the profession who has been addicted to the cup that cheers and inebriates at the same time. I have heard that a pretty and popular soubrette must have her glass of brandy between the acts, and that an actor already at the top of the ladder is succumbing to the seductive and rosy liquid. Still liquor has not made nearly the number of victims in the ranks of the theatrical class that it has in other professions, and it is only alluded to here to illustrate a comical incident

that once occurred during the engagement of a burlesque combination in Kansas City. It was not known until six o'clock at night that the comedian of the comedy was in a sad state of intoxication somewhere through the town. Parties were sent out at once

SOBERING A COMEDIAN.

to look him up. They did not succeed in finding him until 7 : 30 when they hurried him to the theatre. It was a terrible job to get him into his stage-clothes and to keep his head steady and his eyes open long enough

to allow his friends to make him up for his part. By the time this had been done the impatient audience shouted and whistled and stamped so violently that at last the manager was obliged to ring the curtain up. Mr. Comedian was in the wings reluctantly accepting the remedies provided by his friends, while they waited for his cue to go on. He was fairly sober when he

M'CULLOUGH AS "VIRGINIUS."

reached the presence of the audience and although he betrayed his condition slightly, few in the house knew enough about the trouble that had been taken with him in order that the manager might keep his word with the public. It is needless to add that Mr. Comedian was very sorry, and sick when he got sober.

CHAPTER IX.

STAGE CHARMS AND OMENS.

The night the Southern Hotel burned down in St. Louis, I was standing at the ladies' entrance when Kate Claxton, whose presence is now always regarded in a city as ominous of a conflagration, came down through the fire and smoke in her night dress and was hurried across the street and out of danger by a gentleman who lent her his overcoat while she made her way to another hotel. There were seventeen lives lost that terrible night, and a young and beautiful actress — Frankie McLellan — in a frantic effort to escape the flames, jumped from a three story window and had her face marked for life by the fall. Just as soon as people got over the horror of the first news of the catastrophe, gossip turned to theorizing and from that diversant stories were told concerning the prominent people who figured in the calamity. Then it became known that Milton Nobles had lost a brand new pair of lavender trousers, in the pockets of which were several hundred dollars that "The Phœnix" had brought him that same evening. Then too, the narrow escape of Rose Osborne, of the Olympic stock company, was recited; but prominent above all, Miss Kate Claxton's presence in the hotel was dwelt upon, and, as she had already fairly earned the unanimous reputation that has since followed her, her name became part of the history of the conflagration, as it has been associated with every conflagration that occurred in her vicinage since.

She is rather ungallantly and untruly styled the "Fire Fiend," and all sorts of predictions are made about the theatre she plays in, the hotel she has her rooms at, and the very town and county in which she is tempo-

KATE CLAXTON.

rarily domiciled. But Kate Claxton, who by the way is Mrs. Stevenson, is not the first person in her profession to have acquired such an unenviable reputation. Thomas S. Hamblin, an actor and manager of the early half of the present century, who came from England in

1825 to star in "Shakespeare," was followed by fire even more relentlessly than Miss Claxton has been. No less than four theatres burned under his management, and it was generally said when he undertook to open or run a place of amusement that from that moment it was fated to the flames. Hamblin figures conspicuously in the history of the Bowery. He died in 1854.

The sailor who braves the dangers of the deep is always blindly superstitious. There is something in the vastness of the ocean, in its misty immensity, in its magic mirage, its wonders and its terrors, that puzzles the mind and sets fire to the imagination of poor Jack, and even bewilders his superior officers. The artist who undertakes to sail before the public and to amuse it for a living is quite as much at sea as your genuine Jack Tar. He or she finds himself or herself on a veritable ocean, beset by dangers, surrounded by unknown and fickle conditions of atmosphere and phenomena. All the logic of the dry land is of no avail in such a situation. The relations of cause and effect are broken up. Magic is the only excuse for the arrival of the unexpected. The seemingly impossible in results is always the most possible. Once embarked in the dramatic sea, no one can tell where the voyage may end, or what it may bring forth. A shipwreck on auriferous rocks may prove a success.

Triumph may come from ruin; happiness from danger, and the longest voyage and the richest freight are often given the most leaky and shallow craft. There is no knowing which boat will float the longest on the dramatic sea — the best equipped or the most shaky and flimsy. So it is no wonder that actors are all superstitious. They have no compass even to guide them when beset by the varying winds of public opinion. The impossible is always sure to meet them; so

they are always on the lookout for magic, and depend in secret quite as much upon their simple necromancy as upon their talent or their study. Every star has, so to speak, a fetich that insures success, or goes through an imaginary formula to invoke prosperity. The public is constantly under the influence of the voudoo arts of actors, and incantations and mystic signs rule the world of Thespis and enslave the public without its knowledge. Some of these fancies and formulæ of intelligent actors are, indeed, more simple and childlike than those that characterize poor Jack of the briny deep.

Imagine, for instance, an actor like John McCullough refusing to approach a theatre except by one route (the one he first takes, no matter how roundabout) from night to night, for fear of breaking the charm of success. Imagine, too, a lot of other trifling things that beset him — signs, omens and the like. If he stumbles when he first enters a scene it is a sign of good luck. If he receives faint applause in the first scene he is sure to succeed, amid thunderous plaudits, in the last; if Forrest's sword, used in the Gladiator, becomes dim by damp air or other cause, it is a sign of lack of fervor in the audience of the evening, while, on the contrary an extraordinary brightness of the weapon is a sure sign of great success. If a negro should cross his path while he is on his way to a performance, that is a never-failing omen of a prosperous engagement, while to encounter a cross-eyed woman (not a man, for strabismus in that sort of creature does not affect John, probably because it is only the woman he looks at), is a sure sign if not of failure, at least of annoyance to himself and coldness on the part of his audience. The Macbeth music is, of course, his great bugbear, as it is with all actors.

(126) THE LATE VENIE CLANCIE.

No success could attend any of his performances if any one were to hum or whistle the witches' chorus in the wings or the dressing-rooms. Any poor, inexperienced devil who might try it would find John, and, in fact, all the company, wrestling with him, and himself lying in the gutter at the back door before he had warbled through two bars of the fatal music. This is, in the opinion of every actor, a sure invocation of disaster. Under the malign influence of this melodic devilishness either the theatre will be burned down (for, if we are to believe the actors and stage tradition, every theatre that was ever burned in this country was put under the spell of fire by some singer or whistler of the witches' chorus), or salaries will not be paid, or the manager will bring his season to an early and disastrous end. Something ill is sure to happen if the Macbeth music is heard, and John shares that belief in common with even the humblest Roman of them all who parades his scraggy shanks nightly in ridiculous contrast with the heroic legs of the tragedian.

John T. Raymond, while believing faithfully in all the regular signs and omens of the stage, has his own special claims to "hog 'em," using the stage vernacular. He has only one suit of clothes for *Colonel Sellers*, and would not have any other under any circumstances. It would change his luck from good to bad.

"Remark," he says, "there never was a success continued where a play was entirely re-costumed. The public interest began to flag always in some mysterious way from the time the new dresses came on. It is the old story of old wine in new bottles. The wine will burst the bottles. There's going to be no burst with my wine. I stick to my old clothes as long as they will stick to me."

He has also a lucky $5 gold piece, which he always carries in his vest pocket on the stage, whatever part

CATHERINE LEWIS.

he is playing, and when he is nervous and fearful of lack of appreciation he has only to rub his magic coin

to make everything lovely. In getting out of bed he will not slip out with the left foot first, lest he may have bad luck all the day. His dreams decide his acceptance of a play, and when he is puzzled between two methods of working up a "point," he is perfectly satisfied to settle it by the toss up of a cent.

Joe Jefferson is also impressed with the magical potency of old clothes. He has never changed his first "Rip Van Winkle" suit, but he has been forced to have it patched and renovated. His hat, wig, beard and "trick" rifle — the one that falls to pieces after his long sleep — are the same that he used when he made his great success in the part in London fifteen years ago. He mislaid this gun last season, just before he played at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, and was forced to get another. That engagement was his first failure, and a bad one. He has found the old rifle, and, the charm being now complete again, he has opened the season with a very successful week in Brooklyn. Joe would break an engagement in any theatre if a dog were to walk across the stage at the first rehearsal. That is a sure sign of death, loss, or fire, as every actor knows. A cat parading the coulisses or walking with dainty tread across the scene, however (even at an evening performance), would be hailed by him and colleagues with delight as an unfailing sign of prosperity, health and renown.

Sothern felt that he was sure to fail with his audience if his valet, by an accident, handed him his wig before his coat was on, while, if he put it on his head at the last moment, and not before the voices of the call-boy was heard summoning all on for his first scene, he had "got 'em dead to rights."

Florence, like Raymond, carries a lucky $5 gold piece, and believes the charm of his popularity reposes

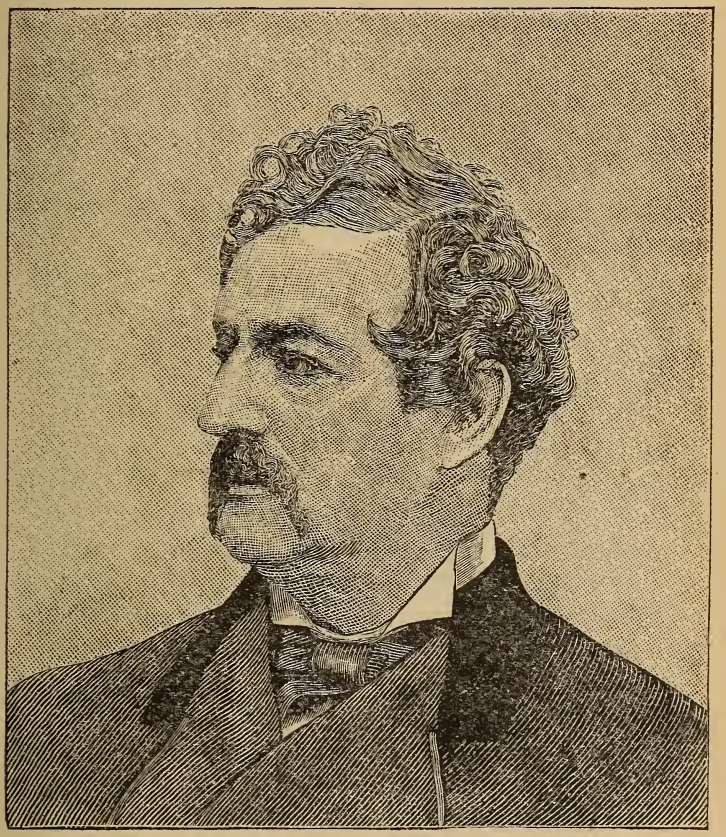
in the fact that he always puts on his costumes in a never-varying order, and never changes his old brushes and articles of "make-up." He, too, is afraid of the necromantic powers of the evil-omened dog, and believes in the magic spells of fairy grimalkin. If the orchestra plays a waltz between the first and second acts of his piece, success is more likely than ever to seal his efforts of the evening.

Mrs. Florence, on the contrary, does not believe in old clothes, but quite the reverse. She thinks, however, that birds (canaries, or any other variety) are sure to bring bad luck, and will not play in the company where there is a cross-eyed girl. The cross-eyed man doesn't count. If the prompter should tear a page of manuscript accidentally, or, moreover, if the page should contain the name or a speech of the character she is acting, there is no use in hoping for a great furor that evening, for there will be nothing but disappointments in the making of points and contretemps in the management of the stage. If the prompter turns out the foot-lights or a row of border-lights, swift disaster is sure to come on the theatre. This was never known to fail in her experience.

Booth will never go on the stage, no matter how late or hurried he may be, without first pacing three time across the green-room, mumbling over not the first, but the very last speech of the piece he is to play that night. Then he walks on, sure of his triumph. If he should fail in his formula, the audience would be cold and unappreciative. It has been his custom to have *Desdemona's* couch set in the second entrance on the stage, left in the last scene of "Othello." According to the old style, the couch should be set in the centre door, behind curtains, exactly in front of the audience. Booth believes in signs, however, and

should he consent to have *Desdemona* slumber in any other place than U. E. L. he would lose his charm in the character of *Iago*.

Frank Chanfrau believes in the efficacy of old



CHANFRAU.

clothes. He has only one suit in *Kit*, and his success is unvarying in that piece. He hates dogs on the stage, believes in cats, knows birds are bad luck, is convinced that a house decorated in a prevailing hue

of decided blue is sure of ill-fortune, and shudders at the mere mention of the Macbeth music. He has steered clear of all these evil influences during his stage career, and has been uniformly successful.

Oliver Doud Byron has a special claim in addition to the regular superstitions of his class. He has a certain tattoo mark of India ink on his right forearm. When he rolls up his sleeves for his "terrible combat" in the last act of "Across the Continent," he must uncover that mark without looking at it, or his fetich is not complete, and the charm of his prosperity will be broken.

Charles Thorne believes his success lies in the fact that he always steps on the stage in the first scene with his right foot foremost, and keeps it in advance until he has delivered his first speech. This done, he is safe and sure of a "walk over" before his critics. Once or twice he has inadvertently stepped out with his left, and on these occasions he has failed, or the piece has fallen flat. Such an accident happened him on the first night of "Lost Children." Manager Palmer, of the Union Square, who has also become a victim of stage superstitions, is fearful of Thorne stepping out with his terrible left foot on a first night, just out of retaliation for some slight or disagreement. Thorne, possessing this magic power for good or evil, not at his fingers' ends, but at the ends of his toes, is a terror to the establishment, and on first nights is treated with distinguished consideration by the entire company. No one gets in his way when he is about to make his stage entrance on a first night, lest he may be thrown out of step and advance with sinister effect upon the scene. Thorne's right foot once put forward, every one breathes freer and plays with greater vim. The critical point of every new play, therefore, lies,

though the critics may not think it, in the malign or favorable magic of Thorne's feet, according as he puts them forward.

Adelaide Neilson was as superstitious as all actresses are. Her evenly-balanced beauty and brains did not free her from the slavery of omens. She carried about with her, ever since her first London success in *Juliet*, a lucky silken rag — a dingy, straw-colored drapery — which she insisted upon hanging over the railing of the balcony when *Juliet* breathes her complaints to the moon. Without this, the fair Adelaide was sure she could not succeed in the scene in any part of the world. She brought the silken rag across the water with her again and again. The drapery was somewhat faded and tattered from long service in the two worlds, but she still clung fondly to it, and said it was possessed of all its olden magic.

Lotta sleeps three hours by daylight, but if she should wake up ten minutes before the usual time (just the time to rush to the theatre) the fates are against her, and she will not do well that evening. If any one whistles in a dressing-room within her hearing while she is donning her costume, she is sure the person is "whistling away her luck," and the house is going to be bad.

Fanny Davenport would not, for any consideration, miss rearranging her wig before the green-room mirror just previous to going on the stage. She has a regular, unvarying formula to go through to guarantee success. She first presses her hands to the sides of her head to be sure the springs are firmly fixed (although she has just had her dresser make that sure in her dressing-room), then gives the "bang" three smart tugs, puffs up the frizzes with a nervous twitch of her fingers, presses the entire wig down from the top of her head,

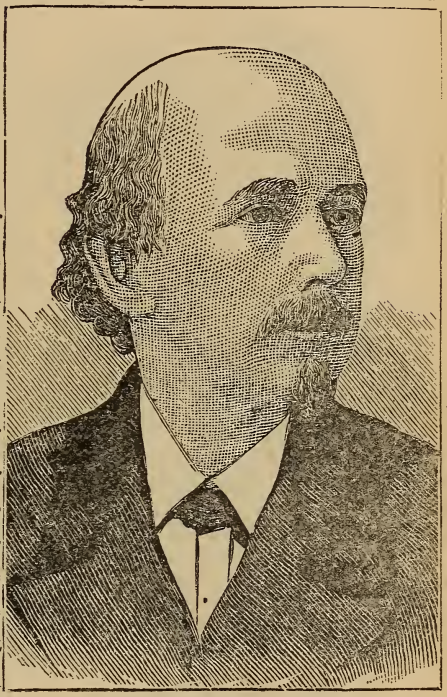
gives her silken trail a final kick to induce it to unfold itself, and then rushes pell mell to the stage in answer to the alarming cry of "stage waiting." Without this formality she would not be herself the whole evening.

FANNY DAVENPORT.

Clara Morris believes in the efficacy of a small medicine vial, which she carries (empty) through every scene, she says, through habit, though it is fair to presume, through superstition. Without the vial she could not get along.

Neilson also had a vial — a special one — which she insisted should only be used for *Romeo's* poison potion. She would handle no other, and has been known to have the bill changed because the vial was mislaid, and would not allow "Romeo and Juliet" to be put up for performance until it was found.

Frank Mayo thinks his magic lies in an old fur cap and a hare's foot, for rouging, which he had ever since he has been on the stage.



DION BOUCICAULT.

Boucicault trembles and is sure of failure for any one of his pieces which is greeted with commendation by all the actors without a dissenting voice. If the players condemn his piece at the rehearsals, he is sure the audience will like it. But in any event no play of his can be a success unless he tears off the cover to the first act, and makes away with the title page at the last rehearsal.

Maude Granger has a certain magic smelling-bottle which she puts to her nostrils just before going on the stage.

Maggie Mitchell attributes her success in "Fan-

chon" to an old pair of shoes which she wears in that piece.

Eliza Weathersby hates birds, doesn't like whistlers, and has for her special charm an embroidered rose, which always appears on her dress or tights, according to the style of part she may be playing.

MRS. BOUCICAULT.

Paola-Marie, the little Parisienne of Grau's opera bouffe, has a pet pug dog which she always fondles at the side-scenes for luck, before going on the stage. This, too, to the intense horror of the rest of the company, who think dogs in theatres bad luck.

Sara Jewett imagines that she commands success and enslaves her audiences by walking through her positions on the stage in her first scene every night before the curtain is rung up for the play.

The managers, too, share this weakness of their actors. None of them would change their ticket-boxes for fear of a change of luck. When they move they take their ticket-boxes with them. Wallack has the same boxes that were used at the doors of his father's theatre years ago, and Daly has those which

received the pasteboards during his first season of success. When Tony Pastor removed from the Bowery to Broadway he took his boxes over there, and has them with him now in his tour over the country. With all our modern innovations and realism, we have not made any inroads on the folk-lore of the drama. The theatre is still fairy-land, and its creatures, though not fairies themselves, commune with them closely.

Actors like many other people have a perfect horror of the number thirteen. The only man in the profession who openly defies the superstition attaching to this number is John R. Rogers, the manager of the "My Sweetheart" Company, of which Minnie Palmer and Robert E. Graham are the star features. Rogers, it is said, not only got together a company of thirteen people, in which the thirteen letters of Mr. Graham's name stood out in uninviting prominence; but he began his season on Friday, the 13th of the month, and in other ways wooed a dire and speedy fate for himself and his people; but good luck appears to have attended him, and he is still defiant as ever of the terror-laden and ominous number. In contradistinction to Mr. Roger's success, the failure of another combination may be given. Frank L. Gardner, who has thirteen letters in his name, brought out the play "Legion of Honor," whose title is composed of exactly thirteen letters, and had Samuel W. Piercy, — who died last winter in Boston, while supporting Edwin Booth in his tour,— for leading man, and by doing so freighted down his enterprise with another ill-starred feature, for Mr. Piercy's name contained thirteen letters. The play failed, and the superstitious people of the profession immediately attributed the failure to the presence of too many baker's dozens in the organization. A certain well-known prima donna whose engagement was

to begin on the 13th of the month went to the impressario and begged to have the date changed; she said she knew she would have no luck if she began to sing on the date provided for her; besides that her friends had persuaded her that fortune would only frown upon her if she made her first appearance on the 13th. The 12th was Friday, another day fraught with frightful evil to the singing and acting fraternity, so rather than make an unlucky beginning, the prima donna opened on the 11th, and sang two nights for nothing, although two nights' warbling under her contract meant an amount of money that would make a poor man's head swim.

The New York *Dramatic News* in a late number contained a funny story about Harry Courtaine and John E. Ince, both gentlemen well and favorably known in the profession. Mr. Ince had solemnly professed his non-belief in good or bad luck, after which he was invited by Mr. Courtaine to walk with him. The *News* tells the story in this happy style: To a query as to where he was going, Mr. Courtaine replied that he was to make an engagement for the coming season with a gentleman now awaiting him at the Union Square Hotel, "and I want a witness," he said, "but I wouldn't have one of those superstitious fellows with me for all the world. They make me ashamed of myself with their besotted —"

Mr. Courtaine stopped suddenly and turned deadly pale. "Here, here!" he cried, "cross fingers, quick!" and seizing Mr. Ince's hand, he crossed the forefinger of his own over it while a tramp with one arm slouched by them. "I saw him over my left shoulder, too," murmured Mr. Courtaine. "Dear me! dear me! how exceedingly annoying!"

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Ince, whom the

performance of his companion had thrown into a profound amazement. "Don't you feel well? What is it?"

"Nothing," replied Mr. Courtaine, in some confusion. "A slight twinge of my old gout. Those fel-

MAUD GRANGER.

lows on the square are enough to give a man the colic, with their eternal talk about Jonahs, unlucky houses, hoodoo managers and the like. I don't know anything I detest more than superstition," said Mr. Cour-

taine, with indignant fervor. "I think it is a lower and more debased vice than habitual drunkenness. If there was a law passed to make it a capital offence, I'm d—d if I wouldn't serve as hangman without asking a cent pay."

At this juncture an old woman, enveloped in an odorous combination of rags and liquor, seized Mr. Courtaine by the sleeve and rolled two eyes, which squinted across at each other almost at right-angles, towards the sky, as she whined: —

"Please, good gentleman, a penny to buy a poor widow bread. Only a penny, dear, handsome gentleman, and God go with you."

Mr. Courtaine dove into his pocket to respond to this artful appeal, and as he did so, glanced at the old woman. Then he began a performance which plunged his companion in a stupor of wonder. Crossing his forefingers, he deliberately spat upon the pavement over them, and then turning in a circle, repeated the expectoration at each of the four points of the compass. This accomplished, he mopped the perspiration from his pallid brow, and shuddered visibly. "It's Friday, too," he muttered. "D—n it all! I might have known it."

"Known what?" asked Mr. Ince.

"Let's go down to Theiss's and get a beer," said Mr. Courtaine abruptly and irrelevantly.

"You'd better see your man first," suggested the prudent Mr. Ince.

"Oh, no. He can wait; besides I think it's too late to catch him in now. I'll hunt him up to-morrow. Come along."

The libation performed, Mr. Ince suggested that they should drop in at the matinee at Pastor's. Mr. Courtaine favored a stroll. Mr. Ince suggested that

his programme would turn out the most pleasing one, and Mr. Courtaine said: "Hold on; we can easily see;" and producing a half-dollar he flipped it, asking, "What is it?"

"Heads," answered Mr. Ince.

"It's tail," remarked Mr. Courtaine. "So the stroll will turn out best. Let's be moving."

They moved along, and as they passed a fruit stand Mr. Ince remarked: "Hello! there are some strawberries."

"Ze first-a of ze season a-Signore," said the Neapolitan nobleman, who presided over the destinies of the stand, with a bow of invitation, "ze very first-a, only feefty cent-a ze box-a."

"By Jove!" cried Mr. Courtaine, picking out three of the finest and leaving the box a quarter empty, "now, then, Ince, make a wish."

"What for?" demanded Mr. Ince, making a raid on the box on his own account.

"Never mind," replied Mr. Courtaine, evasively, "only whenever you eat new fruit or vegetables make a wish."

And he posted the strawberries into his oratorical orifice, and walked off, leaving the fruit vender foaming at the mouth, and snarling "*corpo di diavola!* zese actor 'ave-a ze sheek-a of a policeman. Oh! *Madonna mia!* Eef zem boys 'ad not steal-a my club!"

The stroll was varied by no further incidents except that Mr. Courtaine walked a block around to avoid passing a drunken man, and nearly lost his life snatching a cast horseshoe up from in front of a street-car. As they turned homeward Mr. Courtaine's eyes singled out a lady approaching with an armful of bundles, and he commenced a species of maniac gavotte, waving his

hands at her and shouting: "Go into the street. Hey! Hey! look out for the ladder!"

And when in spite of his adjurations, Mrs. Courtaine — for the lady was none other — walked under a ladder leaning against the side of a rising building. He sank upon a row of beer kegs and fastened a cumulative grip on Mr. Ince's arm, exclaiming — "Did you witness it wasn't my fault? I warned her in time, didn't I?"

* * * * * * * * * *

"Do you remember my wife walking under a ladder yesterday?" observed Mr. Courtaine to Mr. Ince on the morrow.

"Yes, what of it?"

"Well, when we got home we found the cat had killed the canary bird — killed and ate it all but the tail feathers," said Mr. Courtaine triumphantly. "Now what do you think of that? Here come around to Theiss's or we'll have those fellows around us with their infernal low-minded superstitions again."

PORTIA AND SHYLOCK.

PORTIA: — Nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.
Merchant of Venice, Act IV., Scene 1.

CHAPTER X.

NOT DOWN IN THE BILL.

Some very queer things happen behind the scenes, and even on the stage in full view of the audience — occurrences that often mar the pleasure of the play for the people in the auditorium, and raise the wrath of the performer. Anything out of the usual run of business that occurs behind the scenes throws the players off the track frequently. There is a great deal of work going on at all times, out of sight or knowledge of the audience, and a slight disturbance may be an interruption fraught with dire disaster. There are actors and actresses in the wings, often, completing the memorization of their parts — "winging" parts, as it is called — or it may be going over their lines again, if they are not confident that they have full possession of them; and to these people, of course, an interruption is a matter of the merest moment. Actors and actresses have always been credited with good memories, but even the best memory may sometimes be thrown off the track, and, indeed, sometimes is, by an untoward or startling incident.

Speaking of memory, reminds me that an actor once memorized an entire newspaper, when they were smaller than now, in a single night. The actor was a man named Lyon, who was playing small parts through the country. An English actor committed the contents of the London *Times*, advertisements and all, within a week, besides studying a new part for every night.

The feat was accomplished on a wager. An actor in London, sat through a play, and although he had

LIZZIE M'CALL.

never seen it before, could repeat every line and word

of it when he got home. He sat down and wrote it out, and the copy thus written was used for the performance of the play in New York. Many readers will recollect the New York couple prosecuted by the Madison Square Theatre Company for selling copies of "Hazel Kirke" to companies that had no right to play the drama. The wife, it was explained, went to the theatre, sat the play out a few times, and dictated the lines to her husband from memory. She had been an actress. There are many other remarkable instances of swift and retentive memories in the profession, but one of the most astonishing of all these feats is what is known as "winging a part," an expression I have used before in this chapter. This consists in going on the stage without having studied the lines at all, the actor carrying the book in his pocket, and pulling it out every time he gets out of sight of the audience, studying the part in the "wings" until he receives his cue to go on again. This method of going through the part continues during the performance, the actor speaking the lines to the best of his ability, and following the text as closely as possible.

Returning to the subject of the chapter, there are several instances of actors and actresses, prominent and minor, receiving their death strokes on the stage while playing. Mistress Woffington, known as "lovely Peggy," while playing at Covent Garden, London, May 3, 1757, fell to the stage at the end of the fourth act of "As You Like it," in which she was playing *Rosalind*, and after muttering "O God! O God!" was carried home to die after a lingering confinement of three years to her bed. George Frederick Cooke received his death stroke in New York, while playing *Sir Giles Overreach*, and Edmund Kean died in England

under similar circumstances. The elder Kean and his son Charles were playing together, the former having the role of *Othello*, the latter that of *Iago*. The date was March 25, 1833. The event, says a chronicler, created great excitement among play-goers; the house was crammed. Kean, who had worn himself out with dissipation, went through the part, "dying as he went," until he came to the "Farewell," and the strangely appropriate words, "Othello's occupation's gone." Then he gasped for breath and fell upon his son's shoulder, moaning, "I am dying — speak to them for me!" And so the curtain descended upon him — forever. His wife had separated from him. "Come home to me; forget and forgive!" he wrote her after he had been conveyed to Richmond. And she came. An hour before he died he sprang out of bed, exclaiming, "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!" and he expired with the dying words of Octavian, "Farewell, Flo—— Floranthe!" upon his lips. This was on May 15, 1833, and he was buried in Richmond churchyard. Instances of the same appalling kind might be multiplied, but it is not the purpose of the writer to cover the stage with gloom, or to cause death to masquerade any more than is absolutely necessary before the foot-lights. More interest will be felt, and the heart will be lighter and the appetite better, if we turn to the ludicrous incidents that have caused audiences ready to shed tears over a tragedy, to turn from the lachrymose attitude to one which might be represented as laughter holding both his sides.

Sol Smith tells a funny story about his earliest experiences on the stage; how he stole in through the back door before the performance, and hid in what he thought was a chest, but which turned out to be the coffin used in the play that evening, and when it was

(148) "PIN UP MY SKIRTS."

carried out on the stage young Smith was so terrified that he pushed up the lid and bounded out, to the surprise of both actors and audience. N. M. Ludlow, who was Smith's partner in the theatrical business, relates a somewhat similar incident about himself.

The awkward position of a "masher" who gets into the "wings" by some hook or crook is often extremely laughable. I saw a serio-comic vocalist — as the songstresses of the variety stage are named — astonish a well-dressed and admiring gentleman who was lounging around at his leisure, — having in some mysterious manner passed the stage door-keeper, — by handing him a pin and remarking, "Pin up my skirts." The man's eye-glass was knocked out of place by the impertinence of the demand, but he took the pin and obeyed the lady's command, and this, too, notwithstanding a second female in tights, was near by, who could have done the job a thousand times better. It was the sweet singer's little joke, though.

Charlotte Cushman and her sister were playing in Trenton, New Jersey, one night. The bill announced was "Romeo and Juliet," with Miss Cushman in her afterwards famous impersonation of the male character and her sister as *Juliet*. The ball-room of the town which was used as a theatre, when occasion required, was sadly lacking in scenery and properties. The sisters went to work, however, and succeeded in getting together everything they needed for the performance, except the balcony in the garden scene. After looking around they found an old bed-quilt, patched, and abounding in numerous colors; it was arranged that a colored bell-boy from an adjacent hotel should, while stationed in the side-scenes, out of view, hold up one end of the quilt while the fair *Juliet* supported the other. The boy was on hand in the evening, and

everything went swimmingly until towards the end of

ANNIE PIXLEY AS "M'LISS."

the scene, and in a most tender part, the darkey stuck his head out from the side and said: "I say, Miss

Cushing, I hear my bell ringin' an' Ize obliged to let my side ob de house drap!" He dropped the quilt; and not only the balcony, but "the house"—the

THE CALL-BOY'S REVENGE.

audience—came down, and that brought the scene to an abrupt and ridiculous end.

Another occasion that was a source of infinite amusement to an audience that had been fully worked up to tragic interest in the play of "Hamlet," occurred at Baltimore, Maryland, a short time ago. The actor cast for *King Claudius* had given some offence to the call-boy — treated him badly in the presence of the company — so the boy made up his mind to have ample revenge. He got a needle, fitted a long piece of thread in it, and then placed it in the cushion chair that answered for the *King's* throne, in such a way that when the time arrived, by a simple jerk of the string he might move the needle skyward. He waited until *Claudius* was supposed to be most interested in the scene before the players, when jerk went the thread, and *King Claudius*, with an alacrity unbecoming royalty, bounded out of his chair as quickly as if he had suddenly sat down upon the sharp end of a lightning rod. He dropped his sceptre and shouting "Ouch!" and nursing the injured part of his anatomy, jumped and danced around as if he had just caught sight of *Hamlet's* father's ghost. There was an interruption to the scene that the audience filled in with boisterous laughter. After the act the *King*, instead of sending one of his officers or guards for the call-boy, as befitted his exalted station, went scouring around the scenery himself, muttering the wildest threats and applying names to that poor boy that he could hardly have won for himself if he lived to be a thousand years old. It is hardly necessary to say that the call-boy did not wait around until the end of that act.

Mrs. Farrel, who was an actress of ability in her time, after being hissed in the part of *Zaira*, the heroine of "The Mourning Bride," and particularly in the dying scene, rose from the stage, and, approaching the foot-lights, expressed her regret at not having mer-

ited the applause of the audience, and explained that she had only accepted the part to oblige a friend, and hoped she would be excused for not playing it better. After this little speech she once more assumed a recumbent position, and was covered by the attendants with a black veil.

On one occasion a danseuse was listening to the protestations of an elderly lover, who was on the point of kissing her hand, when, as he stooped down his wig caught in the spangles of her dress. At that moment she was called to the stage, and made her appearance before the audience amid general laughter and applause; for on the front of her dress was the old beau's wig or scalp, hanging like a trophy from her belt. The applause was renewed when a bald head was seen projecting from the wing in search of its artificial covering. Stories, too, are told of imprudent admirers, who, having excited the jealousy of the stage carpenter, did not take the precaution to avoid traps, and as a consequence found themselves shot up into the "flies," or hastily dropped down to the dismal depths below the stage.

It is a very common trick to let people through a trap-door. I was present several times in the theatre when victims were carried down to the black and uninviting space below the stage. At a benefit given to a popular treasurer in St. Louis, a well-known young man who was in the liquor business was prevailed upon to appear in the programme and was put down for a lecture on temperance. The house was crowded that night, and P—— H——— was there in all the glory and wealth of his wardrobe, fully prepared to entertain the audience for half an hour or so. One of the boys had had the pleasure — so he termed it — of hearing H—— read his lecture through, and he gave the

others the cue for the fun. The lecturer's table was placed just at the edge of a trap, and a trick candle, one such as is used in pantomime, and that keeps on

THOS. W. KEENE.

growing taller and taller as the clown in vain tries to get within reach of the flame, stood at one side of the piece of furniture. H—— went on the stage bowing

his neatest and smiling his sweetest. He was, of course, received with "thunders of applause," and storms of the same kind interrupted him at frequent intervals. At last the place was reached where the fun was to commence. "Bang!" went a gun in the air, the thunder rolled, there was red fire, and the floor parted. Down went H—— slowly, and up went the candle. He was so terror-stricken that he could do nothing, and was left to grope his way through the darkness to the stairs. The language he used when he once more found himself among his friends was stronger and less elegant than were the phrases of his lecture. He appears at no more benefits.

A young society man now of Cincinnati was treated in the same way, a trap having been left open upon which he stepped in the middle of a play in which he took the leading part with a company of amateurs, when down he went, to the dismay of his friends, the delight of the young fellows who had "put up the job," and to his own horror. In Leadville, Col., a serio-comic singer who had incurred the displeasure of one of the stage hands, was retiring into the side scenes bowing gracefully and kissing her hand to the audience, when suddenly down went one of her pink-clad limbs through an open trap, and her moment of triumph was turned into one of ridicule, and in addition to her mortification the leg was broken. Such tricks are always dangerous and more frequently are followed by mourning than fun.

Powell, the English actor, sought in vain one night for a "super" who was wont to dress him, but who on this occasion had undertaken to play the part of *Lothario's* corpse in "The Fair Penitent." Powell, who took the principal character, shouted in an angry tone for Warren, who could not help raising his head

from out the coffin in which he was lying, and answering, "Here, sir." "Come, then," continued Powell, not knowing where the voice came from, "or I'll break every bone in your body!" Warren, know-

EMMA THURSBY.

ing that his master was quite capable of carrying out the threat, sprang in his fright out of the coffin and ran in his winding-sheet across the stage.

The dying heroes and heroines of the present day

wait to regain animation until the curtain has fallen, when they reappear in their own private characters at the foot-lights. A distinguished tenor, Signor Giuglini, being much applauded one night for his singing in the "Miserere" scene of "Il Trovatore," quitted the dungeons in which *Manrico* is supposed to be confined, came forward to the public, bowed, and then, not to cheat the executioner, went quietly back to prison again. A much more modern story of the confusion of facts with appearances is told, and with truth, of a distinguished military amateur, who had undertaken, for one occasion only, to play the part of *Don Giovanni*. In the scene in which the profligate hero is seized and carried down to the infernal regions, the principal character could neither persuade nor compel the demons, who were represented by private soldiers, to lay hands on one whom, whatever part he might temporarily assume, they knew well to be a colonel in the army. The demons kept at a respectful distance, and, when ordered in a loud whisper to lay hands on their dramatic victim, contented themselves with falling into an attitude of attention.

Jules Janin, in the collection of his *feuilletons* published under the title of "Histoire de la Littérature Dramatique," tells how in the ultra-tragic tragedy of "Tragadalbas," an actor, in the midst of a solemn tirade, let a set of false teeth fall from his mouth. This was nothing more or less than an accident which might happen to any one. Lord Brougham is said to have suffered the same misfortune while speaking in the House of Lords. But the great tragedian showed great presence of mind, and also a certain indifference to the serious nature of the work in which he was engaged, when he coolly stooped down, picked up the

teeth, replaced them between his jaws, and continued his speech.

LILLIAN RUSSELL.

An some French provincial theatre, where a piece was being played in which the principal character was

that of a blind man, the actor to whom this part had been assigned was unwell, and it seemed necessary to call upon another member of the company to read the part. Thus the strange spectacle was witnessed of a

JOE JEFFERSON.

man supposed to be totally blind, who read every word he uttered from a paper he carried in his hand.

At an English performance of "William Tell," the traditional arrow, instead of going straight from *Tell's* bow to the heart — perforated beforehand — of the

apple placed on the head of *Tell's* son, stopped half way on the wire over which it should have travelled to its destination. Everything, however, succeeded in

ROLAND REED.

Rossini's "William Tell," except the apple incident, as everything failed in "Dennis's Appius, except that thunder which Dennis recognized and claimed as his own when he heard it a few nights afterward in "Mac-

beth." Yet it has never been very difficult to represent thunder on the stage. One of the oldest theatrical

LAWRENCE BARRETT.

anecdotes is that of the actor, who, playing the part of a bear, hears a clap of stage-thunder, and mistaking it for the real thing, makes the sign of the cross.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ILLUSIONS OF THE STAGE.

A person can gain an idea of the extent of stage decorations and the possibility of scenic illusions in the old English theatre by reading a description of the theatre as it existed in its poverty of costume and bareness of paint in the Elizabethan era. Rousseau has left a description of the Paris Opera House as he saw it and it will be found interesting to all who are acquainted with the methods and the absolute magnitude of the theatre of the present day. It must be remembered, however, when considering the smallness of the stage described by Rousseau, that it was blocked up on both sides, as was the early English stage, by the aristocratic section of the audience, who sat in rows by the side of the singers while the plebeian music lovers stood up in the pit. It was in exactly the same condition as the English stage, when actors and actresses were interrupted and even insulted by their lordly patrons; — as when Mrs. Bellamy one evening as she passed across the stage at Dublin was kissed upon the neck by a Mr. St. Leger, whose ears the actress boxed there and then; Lord Chesterfield rose in his box on this occasion and applauded; the entire audience followed his example and at the end of the performance St. Leger was obliged by the viceroy to make a public apology to the actress.

"Imagine," writes Rousseau about the Paris Opera, "an inclosure fifteen feet broad, and long in propor-

tion; this inclosure is the theatre. On its two sides are placed at intervals screens, on which are curiously painted the objects which the scene is about to represent. At the back of the inclosure hangs a great curtain, painted in like manner, and nearly always pierced and torn, that it may represent at a little distance gulfs on the earth or holes in the sky. Every one who passes behind this stage, or touches the curtain, produces a sort of earthquake, which has a double effect. The sky is made of certain bluish rags, suspended from poles, or from cords, as linen may be seen hung out to dry in any washerwoman's yard. The sun, for it is seen here sometimes, is a lighted torch in a lantern. The cars of the gods and goddesses are composed of four rafters, secured and hung on a thick rope in the form of a swing or see-saw; between the rafters is a coarse plank, on which the gods sit down, and in front hangs a piece of coarse cloth, well dirtied, which acts the part of clouds for the magnificent car. One may see toward the bottom of the machine two or three foul candles, badly snuffed, which, while the greater personage dementedly presents himself swinging in his see-saw, fumigate him with incense worthy of his dignity. The agitated sea is composed of long angular lanterns of cloth and blue pasteboard, strung on parallel spits, which are turned by little blackguard boys. The thunder is a heavy cart, rolled over an arch, and is not the least agreeable instrument heard at our opera. The flashes of lightning are made of pinches of resin thrown on a flame, and the thunder is a cracker at the end of a fuse. The theatre is, moreover, furnished with little square traps, which opening at the end, announce that the demons are about to issue from their cave. When they have to rise into the air, little demons of

stuffed brown cloth are substituted for them, or sometimes real chimney-sweeps, who swing about suspended on ropes, till they are majestically lost in the rags of which I have spoken."

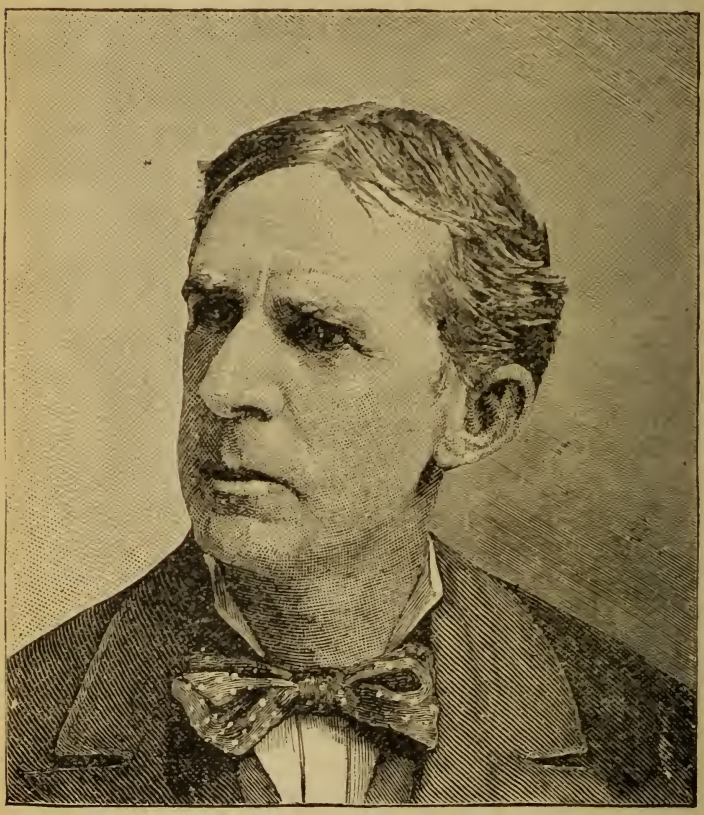
This sad condition of theatrical illusions cannot be

J. K. EMMETT.

regarded otherwise than strange when it is recorded that decorations were of a higher order in the reign of Louis XIV. Saint-Evremond is authority for the statement that the sun and moon were so well repre-

sented at the French opera during this period that the ambassador of Guinea, who assisted at one of the performances, was decoyed into leaning forward in his box and religiously saluting the orbs. Had Rousseau lived to the present day, the wonders and mysteries of our stage would have made his great heart leap within him. Modern art and modern mechanism have brought stage representations so close to nature that the scenes seem to be small sections, either of country or city, mountain or vale, lifted from the face of the world and placed in all their beauty at the stage-end of the theatre. Managers do not fear to go to any length in mounting plays properly, and there is nothing in the outer world that defies reproduction in the mimic sphere. Steam is freely used; fire rages fiercely through folds of inflammable canvas; the lightnings flash; Hendrick Hudson and his men roll nine-pins in the Catskills, and the low rumble of the thunder, as the balls rattle down from crag to crag, is distinctly heard by the audience; poor, demented old *Lear* cries to the winds to crack and blow their cheeks, and they do so to his full satisfaction; there is genuine rain in the shipwreck scene of "The Hearts of Oak;" a plentiful fall of the beautiful snow for "The Two Orphans;" a perfect reproduction of a mountain rivulet for "The Danites;" steamboat and railroad explosions of a realistic character in everything; an almost horizonless sea for the great raft scene in "The World;" and gorgeous coloring, rich furniture, choice bric-a-brac, rare paintings and the Lord only knows what, for the thousand and one melodramatic and society plays that are now flooding the stage. Then there are gems apparantly rich enough to have come from the treasuries of Khedive or Sultan, and robes so redolent of royalty in color

and material that the female portion of the audience is almost driven to distraction in admiring and coveting them. Little does the average lady patron of the theatre imagine that the finery she covets is often the product of the artiste's own needle, and that the



JOHN T. RAYMOND.

gaiety and glory of an actress's career — with hundreds of admirers pouring diamonds into her lap, and hundreds of others feasting upon her charms, while many hang with reverence upon the words that fall from her

lips — is but the merest of dreams; and that the sister whose professional successes cause her to look upon the stage as a place of pleasure only, may live in a tenement surrounded by a poor family to whose support her life-efforts are devoted; that she has few admirers; that she is pure as the fairest and purest woman in private life, and that her only sacrifice is made to the art which she loves and to which she has consecrated herself.

There are but few who have not an exaggerated idea of the value of everything they see upon the stage. It is true that many actresses are rich enough to wear diamond necklaces, and to otherwise sprinkle their persons with brilliants of the first water; but it is equally true that many others are poor, and that the gems they wear come from the cheap stock of articles kept in the theatrical property-room. An amusing story is told by Olive Logan, who was an actress, about the false value placed upon stage jewels.

"While I was fulfilling a round of theatrical engagements in the South, during the war," says Miss Logan, "I was compelled by 'military necessity,' to pack up my jewels and send them to Cincinnati. Of course there were a number of stage trinkets in the bag as well as some little jewelry of real value, but as it happened a fabulous idea had got afloat of the value of my little trinkets, and I was offered large sums for the carpet sack, 'just as it stood,' after I had packed it to send it to Cincinnati.

"'I'll give you ten thousand dollars for it without opening,' said one gentleman; 'I want those ear-rings for my wife?'

"'No,' I answered, 'no; those things were given me in France, and I shouldn't like to part with them.'

" 'Are the ear-rings in here?' "
" 'Yes,' I answered.
" 'And the bracelet?' "
" 'Yes.' "

KATHERINE ROGERS.

" 'Fifteen thousand — will you?' "

" 'No, no,' I answered, and the matter ended. I couldn't help laughing, for truly I might have made a sharp bargain if I had wished. Somebody would have

been sold, and that somebody not myself. I returned to Cincinnati after my trip to Nashville, and there found my effects awaiting me in good order. One day in the Burnet House I was accosted by a pleasant-looking gentleman, who informed me that he had taken charge of the bag from Louisville to Cincinnati.

" 'Did not Mr. —— send it by express?' I asked.

" 'No. I was coming up, and he thought it best to entrust it to me.'

" 'I'm very much obliged to you,' I said.

" 'Indeed, you have cause to be,' he said, good-naturedly. 'I give you my word it's the last time I'll have on my mind the charge of fifty thousand dollars' worth of diamonds.' "

After an English lady of rank returned from the continent, she found her trunk robbed of its jewels. Detectives traced the jewels to a London pawnshop, where they had been sold for $5. The thieves were arrested, and when one of them was asked why he had been so foolish as to sell nearly one hundred thousand dollars' worth of diamonds for $5, he answered: "Why, yer honor, we never thought for a minute as how they were real jewels; we just thought the lady was some play-actor woman, and that the whole lot wasn't worth but a few shillings."

The trinkets are no more deceptive than are many other means employed to astonish and gladden the public. The production of thunder, the simulation of rain-fall, the fictitious roaring of winds, and the multiplication of suns, moons and stars are among the numerous illusions that give to the theatre that marvellous charm under whose spell thousands are nightly placed and held. In the olden times these effects were produced in a simple and by no means mystifying manner, but late years have made them so perfect in

their application that none but the initiated can even begin to think out the solution of the wondrous effects

JOSEPHINE D'ORME.

in which the stage now abounds. A new effect, such as the enormous stretch of sea and sky to be found in

"The World," is something that dramatic authors and stage mechanics are always seeking after and are glad to find. The revolving tower in "The Shaughran" was a puzzle to everybody. Now there are hundreds of effects of this kind with folding and vanishing scenes that are even more wonderful than Boucicault's tower. Viewed from the wings the simplicity of the means employed to produce these effects makes them absolutely laughable. They shall be explained in this chapter.

Thunder-storms are common efforts at realism, and they are sometimes simulated in a way that makes them appear to fall very little short of nature. The earliest style of stage thunder was effected by vigorously shaking a piece of sheet iron which made a rattling and ear-disturbing noise. Even now when a show is "on the road" and a hall without the usual first-class accessories must be used, the audience, and the actor too, must be satisfied with sheet-iron thunder. The modern invention is known as the thunder-drum, and it stands over the prompter's desk where it can be easily reached by a long stick with a thick, soft padding at the end — similar to the sticks used in beating bass-drums. The thunder-drum consists of a calf-skin tightly drawn over the top of a box frame. With this instrument the low rumbling of distant thunder or the long roll of the elemental disturbance may be attained, and, following the sharp rattling of the shaken sheet of iron and the flash of ignited magnesium an effect is produced that completely awes the simple citizen who knows nothing of the mechanism of the stage.

The prompter, too, who by the way is a most responsible person among the individuals who populate the mimic world, has control of the rain machine.

This is a wooden cylinder, about two feet in diameter, and four or five feet long. It is filled with dried peas which rattle against wooden teeth in its inside surface, as the machine, which is in the "flies," is operated by a belt running down to the prompter's desk. This reminds me that I have used the expression "flies" several times without explaining what is meant. The "flies" is a term used to designate the scenery and spaces above the stage, and as there is a great deal of it, it has as much importance in a theatrical sense as any other part of the back of the house. Well, to resume the explanation, the prompter has the rain machine in the "flies" fully under control and can turn out any kind of a rain-storm the play may require; if a swirl of the aqueous downpour is needed, — such a manifestation of wrathy lachrymoseness as you find in a storm that at intervals beats mercilessly against your windows and the side of your house, — one good, strong, sharp pull at the rope will effect it. Less atrocious efforts of the elements may be obtained with a slighter exertion of muscle at the rope or belt. The wind machine is a very necessary adjunct of these storm effects, and it is to be found in every large theatre, furnishing "a nipping and an eager air" or one of those howling blasts that make night desolate and day disastrous. The wind machine may be moved to any part of the stage. Sometimes it is behind the door of a hut through which snow is fiercely driven, and at other times it may be in the side scenes, or any locality to which or through which the storm is rushing. It is an awful funny thing to the man at the wind machine to think of the cold chill he sends down the back of the sensitive play-goer as the wind whistles across the scene in which poor blind *Louise*, in the "Two Orphans," figures, or that scene in "Ours"

where *Lord Shendryn* is at the mercy of the pitiless storm. The wind that makes the warm blood frigid

FERDINAND AND MIRANDA.

MIRANDA:—If you'll sit down,
I'll bear your logs the while.
Tempest, Act, III., Scene 1.

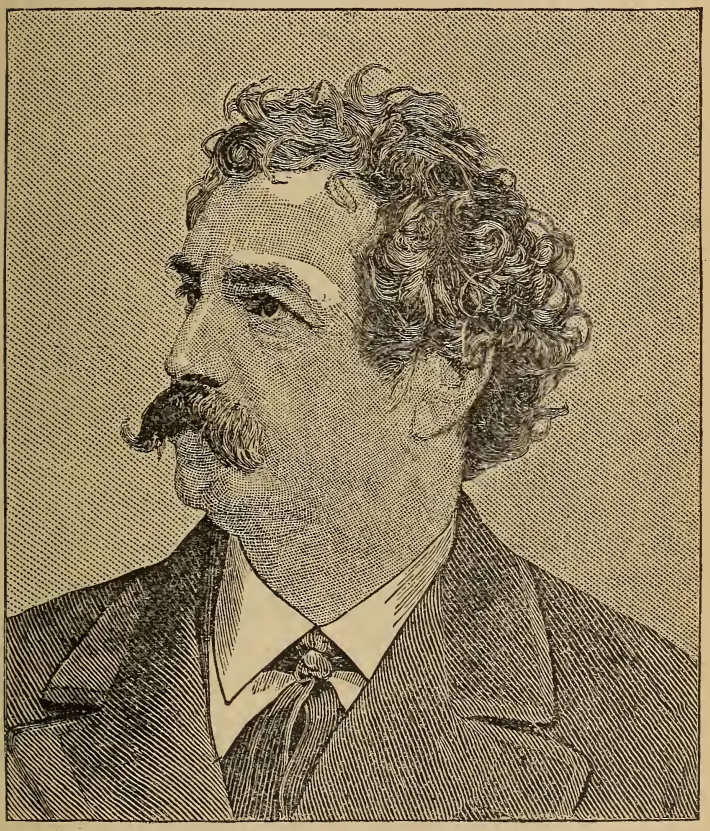
under such circumstances is very easily constructed. A cylinder from which extend paddles is set in a suit-

able frame and above its top is stretched a piece of grosgrain silk. The silk is stationary, but the cylinder and paddles are operated by means of a crank and sometimes by a "crank." Swift motion produces woeful gusts of the windy article, and a steady blast may be duplicated by patiently working the machine. When the property-man is driven to the necessity of providing rain and wind in theatrical districts that do not boast of modern appliances he obtains a rain effect by rolling bird-shot over brown paper that has been pasted around a hoop, and the wind is raised by swinging around a heavy piece of gas-hose. This kind of thing is called "faking" the wind or rain.

When real water is used on the stage to simulate rain, as in the first act of the "Hearts of Oak," or "Oaken Hearts," as they at one time tried to call a pirated edition of it, the effect is obtained by carrying water to the stage lofts, during the day, where it remains in a tank connected with a long piece of perforated pipe, back of the proscenium border, and stretching across the stage. At night when the proper time arrives the water is allowed to run into the pipe, from which it of course falls in numerous small streams upon a rubber tarpaulin that has been stretched below to receive it. So too in mountain rivulets with "real water," as in "The Danites," a tank in the loft must be filled daily with water to supply the nightly scene. In all instances of this sort the effect is quite realistic, and never fails to meet with a hearty appreciation by the audience.

The snow-storm is also usually a pleasing stage picture, and is brought about in a most simple manner. White paper is cut into very small pieces, which are carefully treasured by the property-man, whose duty it is to see to everything of this kind in and around

the stage, and who regards the manufacture of a snow-storm as a very slow and tedious piece of work. When the snow is ready it is placed in what is called the snow-box, a long narrow affair with slats on the bottom



LESTER WALLACK.

leaving room enough for the pieces of paper to sift through, when the box is given a swaying motion. The contrivance is swung over the stage by means of two ropes, and is operated by a third leading to one side of the stage. When the chilled heroine comes

upon the scene amid a terrible fall of snow and draws her thin garments tightly over her shoulder, while she shivers, the snow-box up above is swinging to and fro, and the white flakes are only bits of paper frauds that the property-man or an assistant will carefully sweep up after the scene or act, to do duty again the following night and for many a night to come.

The snow-storm and the other illusions described above are only a fraction of the things the property man has to look after and keep in order. He has charge of everything upon the stage and is responsible for everything except the scenery. When a play is running that requires handsome appointments, it is his business to provide. Within the past decade or so of years it has become the custom to borrow expensive furniture from generous local dealers who are often satisfied with the simple and easy remuneration of a line or two acknowledging the loan, in the programme; or a certain price is paid for the use of the furniture during the run of the play; or the set is purchased outright from the dealer and repurchased by him at a reduction when the theatre is done with it. Nearly all theatres, however, are supplied with suitably handsome furniture for an ordinary society play, and it is only when gorgeousness is aimed at that managers are obliged to borrow. Pistols, knives, helmets, lances, battle-axes, canes, cigars, money, pocket-books, the vial from which Juliet takes the fatal draught, the marble or majolica pedestals, the rich vases, sunflowers such as are used in the æsthetic play of "The Colonel," the paste-board ham, the tin cups, or cut glasses that the characters drink from, fire-place, mantel, and looking-glass — these, and many other articles the property-man furnishers the players, either placing the stationary fixtures on the stage, or sending the call-boy to

the performers with the articles they require. The check-book that the rich banker draws from his pocket when he hands $100,000, more or less, over to somebody else in the play, the quill or pen he writes the

CLARA MORRIS.

check with, and the bottle out of which he dips the imaginary ink, all come from the property-room, and go back to it again after the act is over. A list of the articles required for a play is furnished the property-

man when a play is to be put on, and these articles he must have when the prompter calls or sends for them. Sometimes the property-man forgets, and then there is trouble in the camp. It is related that having for-

HELEN DINGEON.

gotten to provide a Juliet with her vial of poison, in time, the article being called for as the actress was about to go on the stage, the property-man snatched up the first thing that looked like a vial that he got his eyes on. It was a bottle from the prompter's desk,

and when Juliet placed the awful draught to her lips and took a pull at the bottle, she discovered to her horror that she had swallowed a dose of ink. The actress, who tells the story herself in her autobiography, said, she wanted to "swallow a sheet of blotting-paper," when she made the inky discovery.

I find in Miss Logan's book from which I have before quoted in this chapter, the following funny inventory of properties furnished a new lessee of the Drury Lane Theatre, London: "Spirits of wine, for flames and apparitions, £12 2*s.*; three and one-half bottles of lightning, £—; one snow-storm, of finest French paper, 3*s.*; two snow-storms of common French paper, 2*s.*; complete sea, with twelve long waves, slightly damaged, £1 10*s.*; eighteen clouds, with black edges, in good order, 12*s.*, 6*d.*; rainbow, slightly faded, 2*s.*; an assortment of French clouds, flashes of lightning and thunder-bolts, 15*s.*; a new moon, slightly tarnished, 15*s.*; imperial mantle, made for Cyrus, and subsequently worn by Julius Cæsar and Henry VIII., 10*s.*; Othello's handkerchief, 6*d.*; six arm-chairs and six flower-plots, which dance country dances, £2." The same author adds another quotation that gives a better idea of the quantity and character of the property-man's possessions, saying: —

"He has charge of all the movables and has to exercise the greatest ingenuity in getting them up. His province is to preserve the canvas water from getting wet, keep the sun's disk clear and the moon from getting torn; he manufactures thunder on sheet iron, or from parchment stretched drum-like on a frame; he prepares boxes of dried peas for rain and wind, and huge watchman's rattles for the crash of falling towers. He has under his charge demijohns for the fall of concealed china in cupboards; speaking trum-

pets to imitate the growl of ferocious wild beasts ; penny whistles for the 'cricket on the hearth;' powdered rosin for lightning flashes, where gas is not used ; rose pink, for the blood of patriots ; money, cut out of tin ; finely cut bits of paper for fatal snow-storms ; ten-pin balls, for the distant mutterings of a storm ; bags of gold containing bits of broken glass and pebbles, to imitate the musical ring of coin ; balls of cotton wadding for apple dumplings ; links of sausages, made of painted flannel ; sumptuous boquets of papier mache ; block-tin rings with painted beads puttied in for royal signets ; crowns of Dutch gilding lined with red ferret ; broomstick handles cut up for truncheons for command ; brooms themselves for witches to ride ; branches of cedar for Birnam wood ; dredging boxes of flour for the fate-desponding lovers ; vermilion to tip the noses of jolly landlords ; pieces of rattan silvered over for fairy wands ; leaden watches, for gold repeaters ; dog-chains for the necks of knighthood, and tin spurs for its heels ; armor made of leather, and shields of wood ; fans for ladies to coquet behind ; quizzing-glasses, for exquisites to ogle with ; legs of mutton, hams, loaves of bread and plum-puddings, all cut from canvas, and stuffed with sawdust; together with all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of a dramatic display. Such is the property-man of a theatre. He bears his honors meekly ; he mixes molasses and water for wine and darkens it a little shade for brandy ; is always busy behind the scenes, but is seldom seen, unless it is to clear the stage, and then what a shower of yells and hisses does he receive from the galleries ! The thoughtless gods cry 'Supe ! Supe ! ' which if intended for an abbreviation of superior or superfine, may be opposite, but in no other view of the case. What would a theatre be without a property-man? A world

without a sun * * * Kings would be trunch-eonless and crownless; brigands without spoils; old men without canes and powder; Harlequin without his hat; Macduff without his leafy screen; theatres

SCOTT-SIDDONS.

would close — there would be no tragedy, no comedy, no farce without him. Jove in his chair was never more potent than he. An actor might, and often does get along without the words of his part, but not with-

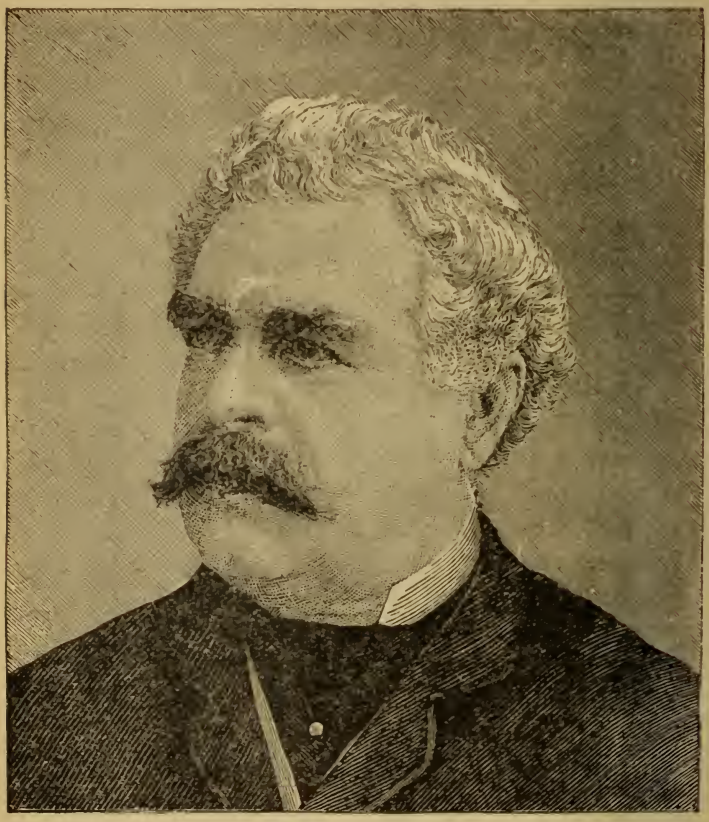
out the properties. What strange quandaries have we seen the Garricks and Siddonses of our stage get into when the property-man lapsed in his duty! We have seen Romeo distracted because the bottle of poison was not to be found; Virginius tear his hair because the butcher's knife was not ready on the shambles; Baillie Nicol Jarvie nonplussed because there was no red-hot poker to singe the Tartan fladdie with; Macbeth frowning because the Eighth Apparition did not bear a glass to show him any more; William Tell in agony because there was no small apple for Gesler to pick; the First Murderer in distress because there was no blood for his face ready; Hecate fuming like a hell-cat because her car did not mount easily; Richard the Third grinding his teeth because the clink of hammers closing rivets up was forgotten; Hamlet brought up all standing because there was no goblet to drink the poison from, and Othello stabbing Iago with a candlestick because he had no other sword of Spain, the Ebro's temper, to do the deed with. So, the property-man is no insignificant personage — he is the mainspring which sets all the work in motion; and an actor had better have a bad epitaph when dead than his ill will while living."

CHAPTER XII.

MORE OF THE MYSTERIES.

A few companies have done away entirely with the canvas-outlined turkey and the sawdust-stuffed dumpling, and have meals that figure in the play served on the stage piping hot from some neighboring restaurant. There is genuine wine too, and often it is champagne of such quality that its sparkle makes the eyes of the tipplers in the audience dance, and their mouths run water. In this and many other ways the desire to get as near to the real thing as possible in art has caused encroachments on the property-man's territory, and gradually his treasures are decreasing. Still his occupation is not as gone as Othello's. Travelling combinations have their own property-man, and the theatres each carry one. Besides the magnificent work of producing snow-storms from paper, etc., there are minor details of his business that he brings as much art to as the average actor and actress take to the stage. He builds a warrior's helmet from simple brown manilla paper and makes a pair of bronze urns in the same cheap way, although they may appear to be worth $300. Bronze figures, too, are obtained from the same material; also flower-pots, mantelpieces, and such things. He goes about the work like an artist. He first makes a model in clay of the article — say it is an urn. This done he builds a wooden box around it, and mixing plaster of paris and water pours the mixture between the box and model where

it is allowed to harden. After the clay mould has been withdrawn the plaster of paris mould is greased, and five successive coats of small pieces of thick brown paper that have been soaked in water are carefully laid



JOHN PARSELLE.

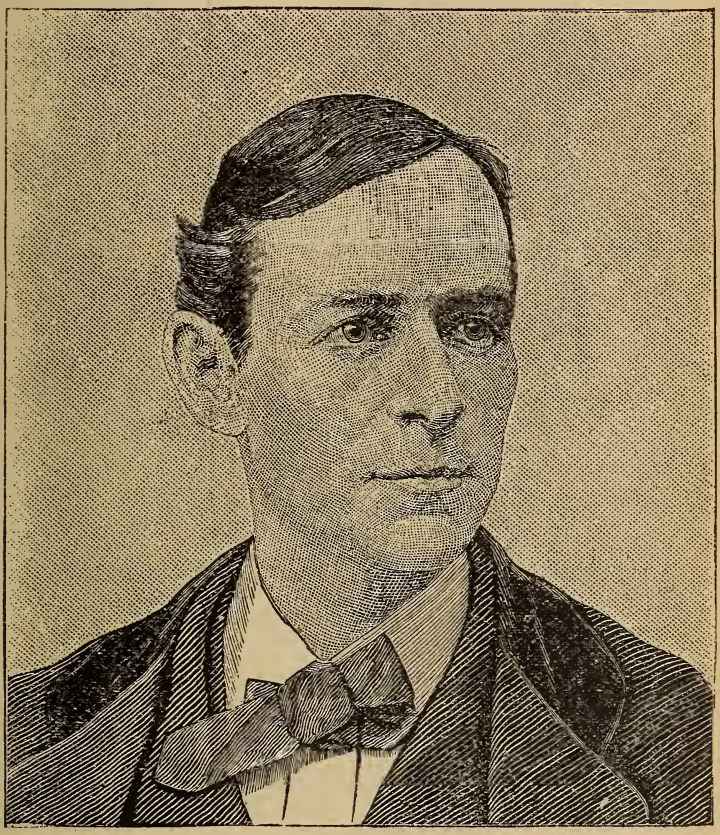
on. A layer of muslin and glue follows, and three more coats of the brown paper. When the application has thoroughly dried, the last three layers of brown paper are removed, and the urn which has been

four days in process of completion is ready for use. Goblets for royal or knightly banquets are manufactured by the property-man in the same manner. Often has a golden goblet, ewer, amphora, or salver fallen to the floor from the hands of awkward Ganymedes and Hebes without creating any consternation among the gathered gallants, or making a sound loud enough to ripple above the lightest notes of the orchestra. These properties are light, but very durable, and well withstand the harsh and careless treatment they frequently receive. Often the entire "banquet set" is made of paper, the skilled work of the worthy property-man, who holds probably the most independent place in the theatre, being obliged to carry no article to anybody — not even a foreign star — but leaves that menial work to the stage manager, prompter, or call-boy.

Moonlight is one of the most poetical and beautiful of stage effects. The first work in producing it is done by the scenic artist, who places a moonlight picture on his canvas. The calcium light filtered through a green glass fills the foreground with its mellow influence. At the back of the stage a row of argand burners with light green shades, gives the faint and soft touches that fill in the distance. A "ground piece" or strip of scenery runs along the floor at the back of the stage, and just under the main scene hides the "green mediums," as the shaded burners are called, from the eyes of the audience. Sometimes the row is above the stage, and protected from sight by the "sky-borders." Silver ripples on the surface of water, and twinkling stars in the sky are frequently made features of moonlight scenery. The twinkling stars are bright spangles hung by pin-hooks to the scenes, and the ripples are only slits in the water can-

vas, behind which an endless towel with slits cut in its surface and a strong gaslight between the rollers and the sides of the towel, is made to revolve. Every time the slits in the towel came opposite the slits in the canvas the light shines through and the silver dance upon the lake or river. When the slits in the towel are made to move upward the ripples seem to lift their silvery tops towards the bending sky. Moon-rise, which is always an agreeable illusion, even to those who know how it is done, is effected by lifting the "moon-box," as it is carried slowly up behind a muslin canvas, upon which heavy paper is fastened to represent clouds. The "moon-box" is an ordinary cubial affair with a round hole at one end, over which a strip of muslin is fastened, and behind which is a strong illumination. Two wires from above are manipulated causing the moon to move through its orbit. When its path lies behind one of the paper clouds the fraudulent Cynthia, just like the genuine queen of the heavens, fails to shine, but as soon as she emerges from the dark spot and the outer ruin of the illuminated circular surface of the "moon-box" touches the white muslin once again, she is the fair queen of night and the young lovers in the audience feel as happy as if they were at home swinging on the front gate, while pa is at the club and ma is entertaining an amiable cousin in the second parlor. The flushed countenance of the moon, as she is just rising from Thetis's arms, as you see her every night when she is taking her first dainty steps up the eastern sky, is obtained by having the lower edge of the muslin painted red and gradually blending with the white, while floating clouds are only the result of hanging or sewing on the gauze drop in front of the muslin screen, pieces of muslin or canvas cut into the proper shapes. The change from day to

night, or *vice versa*, effects that surpass the other in real beauty, and also in attractiveness for the public, is produced by having a drop twice the usual length, painted one half in a sunset and the other half in moon-



SOL SMITH RUSSELL.

light. If the change from day to night, which is the more effective, is desired, the sunset sky occupies the upper half of the drop — that is nothing but the sunset sky is presented to the eyes of the audience. The dis-

tance scenery is painted upon a separate piece and the outlines of the objects are sharply cut out so that the sunset sky can be seen above the irregular outline of the horizon. A gauze drop hangs in front to give the picture the required hazy effect, and red lights give a sunset glow to the entire scene. Rolling up the back drop the change is made slowly and carefully until the moon is discovered in the night half of the sky and goes up with it, while the usual moonlight mediums are brought into requisition to increase the brightness of the view.

There are two ways of producing ocean waves. Sometimes a piece of blue cloth with dashes of white paint for wave-crests covers the entire stage, when the necessary motion of the waters is obtained by having men or boys stationed in the entrances to sway the sea. Again, each billow may be made to show separate with the alternate rows of billows rearing their white crests between the tips of the row on each side. These billows are rocked backward and forward — to and from the audience — while the ocean's roar comes from a wooden box lined with tin and containing a small quantity of bird shot. The desired sound is produced by rolling the box around.

Anybody who has witnessed Milton Noble's "Phœnix" properly placed on the stage, or "The Streets of New York," must have been, the first time, both terrified, and still somewhat delighted, with the fire scenes. Of late years they have been made wonderfully thrilling, and almost perfect fac-similes of the Fire Fiend himself. The scene-painter gets up his house in three pieces. The roof is swung from the "flies"; the front wall is in two pieces, a jagged line running from near the top of one side of the scene to the lower end of the other side. If shutters are to

fall, as in "The Streets of New York," they are fastened to the scene with "quick match," a preparation of powder, alcohol, and lamp wick. Iron window and door frames are covered with oakum soaked in alcohol

ROSE COGHLAN.

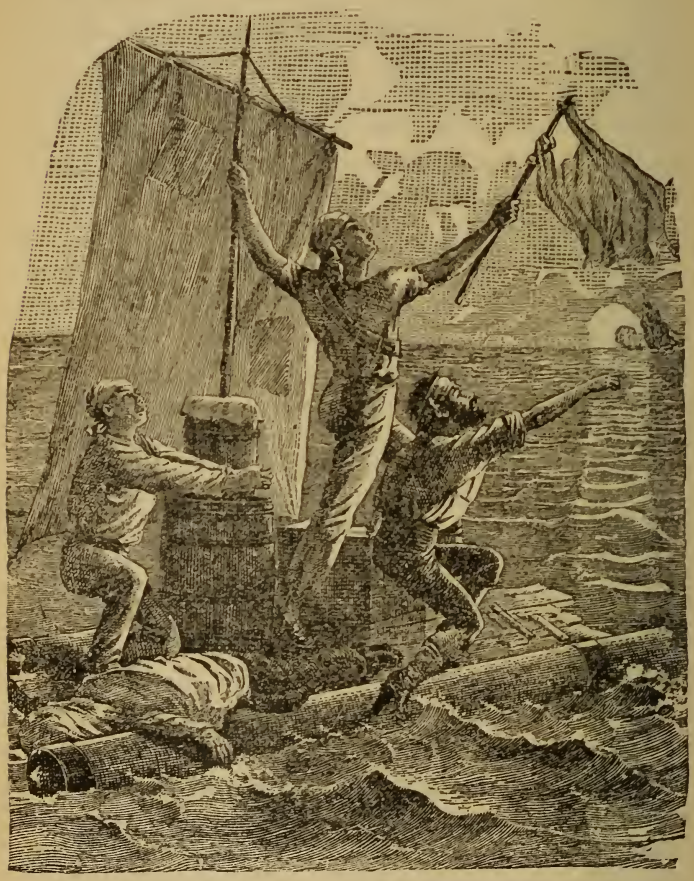
or other fire-quickening fluid. Steam is made to represent smoke, and the steam itself is obtained by dissolving lime in water. A platform from the side affords a footing to the firemen who are fighting the flames in the very midst of the burning building, and

an endless towel with painted flames keeps moving across the picture after the first wall and roof have been allowed to fall in, while red fire plays upon the whole picture and "flash torches" are made to represent leaping tongues of flame. There appears to be a great deal of danger from the operation of a scene of this kind, but if proper care is taken the danger is as worthy of consideration as that attending the presentation of a parlor scene.

"The World" has been pronounced a novelty in scenic effects. I went behind the scenes to see how the thing worked, and had the pleasure of finding out all about it. The play is in seven set scenes. The first had nothing unusual in it except that the ship with full steam on and the dock was produced very artistically. The ship and the buildings were in profile with a good stretch of sky beyond, that was all. Next came the explosion scene, when the vessel was, by the supposed use of dynamite, sent flying in splinters in mid-ocean, and all save four souls went down to the briny depths. The mere ship setting, with its boilers, its hatches, its galleries, spars and guys, was worthy of admiration. While the performers were leading up to the point where the awful and fateful moment comes, a man sat quietly behind the scenes ready to fire an anvil of guns, each charged to the muzzle; men stood at the numerous openings in the rear, and men with chemical red-fire occupied the side-scenes, while others with powdered lycopodium were under the stage beneath a half-dozen grated openings. At the left, in the wings, stood an array of "supers," to rush on and increase the commotion when the shock came. When the heavy villain announced that there was a dynamite machine on board, and the captain gave orders to his men to overhaul everything below and try to find it—

then the thunder came. Bang went the young cannons in the rear. The stage shook, and the theatre seemed ready to fall about our ears; the females shrieked; the "supers" rushed on and shouted; then came the leaping flames from below and from the sides, until, finally, the whole picture was one burning glow and whirl of smoke, and the curtain came down in time, I suppose, to prevent a panic, for women shrieked, and men got up from their seats to flee from the theatre. Act three brought the grandest illusion of all — the great raft scene. This picture shows a raft tossing on a rolling ocean with a vast stretch of sea on all sides, the sky and waters apparently meeting as far away as if they were realities and not mere attempts at nature. This scene always struck me with awe until I saw it from the stage. The second act at an end, the stage manager has the stage cleared in a short time; then the carpenter and his assistants go to work. A "ground piece" of sea is placed across the stage at the first entrance. All the side scenes are removed and a hugh curtain of light blue is hung in a semi-circle from one side of the stage, up around to the rear and then down to the other side. A couple of men now come down to the centre of the stage bearing something that looks like an old barn-door with four swinging legs, one at each corner. A pivot is fastened on the stage; the barn door is balanced on it and down through four small openings in the stage go the four arms or legs, at points corresponding with the four corners of the door. I can see now that the upper side of the door bears a slight resemblance to a rude raft, the timber being artistically painted upon its surface. Somebody sticks a pole in the side up the stage. A box is placed at one end for the villain who is among the saved; a cushion is furnished at the other end for

the young lady who plays the lad, *Ned; Old Owen*, the miner, lies along the lower side and *Sir Clement Huntingford*, the hero, takes his stand at the mast, pale and haggard with hunger and anxiety. The sea



THE RAFT SCENE.

cloth, covering the stage except for a rectangular aperture that goes around the raft and has its edges fastened to the raft, is spread; boys crawl under the

sea and lie upon their backs; men stand in the side scenes holding the ragged edges of the already white-crested sea. Everything is ready now, and amid the right kind of music the curtain goes up on the magnificent raft scene. Four men under the stage have hold of the four pieces hanging from the corners of the raft, and by pulling in exact line give it the motion of the heaving sea; the men in the side scenes agitate the blue cloth and the boys beneath it toss and roll the cloth with hands and feet. *Old Owen* dies before *Sir Clement* sights a ship no bigger than a star away off in the horizon. He ties a rag to the mast for a signal; but the ship keeps moving past, until at last, to the despair of all on board the raft, it is about to dip below the horizon. But it suddenly tacks; there is a tiny rocket seen curving in the air; the ship has noticed the signal of distress and down comes the curtain upon the happy trio left alive on board their storm-tossed and frail raft. Passing over two acts that are only eventful the sixth comes, which represents the yard of a lunatic asylum, with two great walls on either side of an iron gate that is set well up the stage, and through which a stretch of the River Thames and the overhanging sky are seen. *Sir Clement*, who is the rightful heir to certain property, has been confined here through the machinations of his brother, who is in possession, and of another scoundrel. Here, though, the hero makes his escape by knocking the officers right and left and bounding through the gate; in a moment the walls part and a house with cornices and wide projections folds together like a stuffed valentine that has been sat upon. One of the walls moves off the stage to the left, the other to the right, each moving in an arc of a circle, and the whole disappearing from the stage, while *Sir Clement* is discovered paddling safely

down the Thames from his pursuers. The walls are moved from the stage through the agency of men stationed inside. Rollers are provided for the scenic structures, and there are two men inside of each piece, the one in advance having a lookout hole and acting as guide. The only thing attractive in the last act is an elevator in the Palace Hotel. This is a simple mechanical effect, however, and needs no explanation. I should have said in describing the sea that the horizon rises gradually from the stage to a height of about three feet at the back, and the sail that is sighted is a tiny ship mounted on a frame work on rollers and pulled across the stage by a small cord. This raft scene is all that has been claimed for it, and the illusion has not its equal on the stage. The revolving tower in "The Shaughraun," and the vanishing scene in "Youth," are both worked in the same manner as the lunatic asylum walls in "The World."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ARMY OF ATTACHES.

I have already written about the property-man, his many duties, and the great responsibility that rests upon him. I have also written about the prompter, and the vast amount of work he is required to do. But there remain behind the scenes and in the body of the house, other persons who go to make up the grand army of theatrical attaches, and whose place in the amusement world is one of some importance, as they are the adjuncts without which the drama would be left naked of its present beauty and splendor and the circumstances under which it would be patronized would be full of inconvenience and discomfort. The door-keepers of theatres are often interesting characters. Sometimes they have been selected outside the ranks of the profession, when, of course, they have little more to tell you about than the habits and peculiarities of the theatre-going public; but many of them are broken-down actors, — actors who have been "crushed," and in whose better days vistas of unlimited hope opened before their dazzled vision. These are full of reminiscences of the old-time saints of the sock and buskin. If one could believe all they have to say, these victims of circumstances could be looked upon as individuals whose destiny it had originally been to knock their shiny stove-pipe hats against the stars of heaven, but, by some strange fatality, had their backs broken and their majestic tread

lamed, so that now they can only shuffle into a free-lunch saloon and bend their necks over the counter as they lovingly embrace a schooner of beer. There is always room at the bottom for the unfortunates of the profession, and they find such provision usually made for them, as taking tickets at the door, or working outside among the newspaper boys in the capacity of agent. The treasurer of a theatre and the ticket seller, who, in the broad sense of the word, may be looked upon as attaches, are people that all patrons of theatres are familiar with. They, with the door-keeper, must in the blandest manner at their command resist the advances of the very numerous dead-heads. A courteous refusal is always deemed the best, but frequently the harshest treatment must be resorted to to get rid of this theatrical nuisance, of whom I shall take occasion to speak later on, as well as of the free-pass system. The treasurer of a theatre is always on terms of intimacy with the professionals who frequent his house, and is usually a jolly-featured, good-natured man who knows how to entertain his friends, to retain the good opinion of his manager, while filling up the ticket-box with passes, and who understands and appreciates the full value of the saying that a soft answer turneth aside wrath. His salary ranges from $25 to $50 a week, while a good ticket-seller, who frequently is made to do all the hard work, may be had for $12 or $15. A door-keeper is paid from $10 to $15 a week.

The great American type of youthful citizen, with all the manners and dignity of old age and the advisory qualities of a Nestor, is the theatrical usher — the young chap who takes your reserved seat ticket with a smile full of malignity and succeeds in getting you into the wrong chair and almost into a prize fight with

every man who comes into the same row of seats. He does this graciously and with such an exhibition of carefulness in comparing the number on your coupon with the number of the chair, that you actually feel ashamed of yourself to have made a mistake after what

MINNIE HAUK.

appeared to you to be an honest, vigorous, and successful effort to show you what was right. The ushers in Western cities are mere boys in uniform; in the East they are young men, and at Haverly's, Wal-

lack's, and other first-class New York establishments, you will find them in full evening dress with as large an exhibition of shirt front as the swellest of the society noodles who are among the patrons of the house. The usher gets $6 or $8 a week, but impresses the stranger as if he owned an interest in the theatre. He may sell calico or run a lemonade stand during the day, but at night he is master of all he surveys, talks of the actresses as familiarly as if he were a blood relation, tries to make you believe he has "a solid girl" in the ballet, and will offer you any favor, from an introduction to the star to a dozen matinee-passes or a game of seven-up with the manager. Like the claquers, he is a regular nuisance. After the first act he will sit or stand and give his opinion of the play, commenting upon the performers in such brief, half ejaculatory, half interrogatory way, as, "Ain't she a daisy, though?" or, "Ain't he a dandy, you bet?" He is expected to applaud even the vilest and least deserving things, and when the cue is given, works his hands and feet as vigorously as I have often seen Henry Mapleson in applauding Marie Roze, his wife, or a travelling manager in commending the efforts of his favorite among the females of his company.

Down in front, right under the glow of the foot-lights, the bald head of the leader of the orchestra shines. Often he is interesting, but sometimes, especially among the leaders for combinations on the road, he has a life history that compels now tears and now again laughter. When he is on the road he may have a wife or daughter in the company, and if he has neither he is bound to look lovingly upon some of the fair talent whose toes twinkle, or voices ripple in song to the tune of his waving baton, and he will smile out through his gold-rimmed spectacles upon his favorite

even while she is courting the favor of the audience, or, perhaps, while she is trying to mash some beefy blonde in the front rows of the parquette. Jealousy often takes possession of the breast of the orchestra leader. It may be that he will find out that the wife he has done everything for to make famous has younger and handsomer lovers, from whose glowing presence she comes to her musical lord cold as a Christmas morning with eighteen inches of ice on pond and river; or it may be that the favorite of the foot-lights whom he adores has found another favorite in the audience; then there is war, and sometimes the orchestra is left without its leader and a story of unrequited love is told in a coroner's inquest held upon a body found floating in a pool, or hanging from a transom in the room of some hotel. To leave the pathetic and get down to solid facts it may be stated that the leader of an orchestra is paid from $75 to $100 a week, and has from a dozen to sixteen musicians whose salaries range from $18 to $30 a week.

Again returning to the bosom of the stage — to the sacred precincts beyond the foot-lights — we encounter the stage manager. Every travelling company has its own employee who directs and runs the stage business, and notwithstanding the abolition of stock companies, several theatres retain stage managers of their own who work in conjunction with the company's, looking after the setting of scenery, bossing the stage hands, etc. The stage manager may be an actor, or he may not, but he must be a man of theatrical training, and thoroughly conversant with all the requirements of the stage. In travelling combinations he usually plays a minor part, and, although he may not be able to act as well as his brethren of the play, he must possess the requisite artistic knowledge to point out and dictate

what all shall do. He supervises rehearsals; casts plays,—that is, assigns to each performer his character; and he looks after the mounting of plays and the costuming, giving the scenic artist the period to which the play belongs, and imparting the same information to the costumers so that there may be no anachronism in the representation on the stage.

The scenic artist, who is often known to the people only by his work, has some extraordinary duties to perform. When a combination or company has a date at a theatre a week or so beforehand, they send on small models of the scenery they require for their play. These models greatly resemble in their general appearance and size the toy theatres that are sold to children. The stage carpenter, who goes around day and night treading the stage in his own shuffling and careless way, and who is entirely unknown to the public, takes the models and builds frames over which canvas or muslin is spread. Then the canvas-covered frame is taken to the scene painter's bridge when it is ready for the colors. In many theatres the bridge is a platform extending across the stage, and distant from the rear wall about a foot. It is on a level with the flies, and the opening between it and the rear wall is used for lowering and hoisting a scene, which is hung on a large wooden frame while the artist is at work upon it. This frame moves up and down, being swung on pulleys. The most improved theatres East and West, in addition to having the dressing-rooms, engines, etc., in a building separate from the theatre, have the paint bridge also separate. Great iron doors, three or four stories high, close the opening to the painting establishment, and all scenery not in use on the stage during the run of a play is stored in the space under the bridge, while the bridge itself is really a long nar-

row room with an opening at one side of a foot or less,

HELPING THE SCENE PAINTER.

through which communication is had with the store-

room, and which gives space for the operation of the frames upon which scenes are painted. The artist's palette is a long table with compartments at the back for different colors, and there is besides a profusion of paint cans, jars, etc., with huge brushes that might serve the whitewasher's wide-spread purpose, and others thin enough to paint a lady's eye-lash. Water-colors are used, and great splotches of it are found along the lengthy palette. The removal of the paint-bridge from the stage is a blessing to actors and actresses alike, for often during a performance at night or a rehearsal in the morning broadcloths and silks received dashes of paint from the brush of the man at work in mid-air. Still actresses do not often keep shy of the paint-bridge. The ballet-girls are sometimes to be found there amusing themselves with the artist and his assistants, and they tell the story of two New York actresses who actually put on aprons, took hold of the big brushes, and assisted a scenic artist in "priming" his canvas. They were bantering him about the slow progress he was making with a scene that was wanted that night, when he remarked: "If you are in such a hurry for the scene, why don't you come up here and help me?" They accepted the invitation at once, and went to work in the manner I have suggested. The scene was ready that night, but the actresses were very tired. They painted no more.

The "priming" of a scene which I have mentioned in the preceding anecdote, consists in laying a coat of white mixed with sizing upon the canvas. When this is dry the artist outlines his scene in charcoal. He first gets his perspective, which he does by attaching a long piece of twine to a pin fixed at his "vanishing point." Then blackening the string and beginning at the top he snaps it so as to make a black line which is

afterwards gone over with ink. This line is reproduced whenever the drawing requires, and the advantage it affords will be readily understood by all who know anything about art or appreciate the value of good perspective in drawing. The sky of the scene is first filled in rapidly with a whitewash brush, after which follows a swift but clever completion of the view. The side scenes which are to be used as continuations of the "flat," as the principal or back part of a scene is called, must be in perspective with the rest of the picture. Scenic artists work very quickly, and can prepare a view in a very short time. Morgan, Marston, Fox, and Voegtlin, in New York; Goatcher, in Cincinnati; and Dick Halley, Tom Noxon, and Ernest Albert, in St. Louis, are among the best scene painters in the country. The salaries paid in this branch of the profession vary from $40 to $150 a week. A New York artist, it is said, who works very fast, receives as much as $100 to $150 for one or two scenes. When it is taken into consideration that at the end of the run of a play these scenes are blotted out to make way for others, the price paid for them is simply enormous.

The old woman of the company is an elderly matronly female, who may be found hovering in the wings of every theatre. She is nobody's mother in particular, but talks in a motherly way to all, and exercises a special supervision over the female members of the company. In strange contrast to her is the call-boy, a mischievious devil-may-care young fellow, who calls Booth "Ed," Bernhardt "Sallie," and has familiar appellations for the most prominent and dignified people in the profession. It is his business to call performers from the green-room in time for them to take their "cue" for going on the stage, and this is about all he has to do except to make trouble, to learn

(204) THE "OLD WOMAN" OF THE COMPANY.

secrets that he whispers about, and to become an impish nuisance revelling in more fun and freedom than anybody else behind the scenes. Aimee took a liking to one of these little gentlemen once and fed him cigarettes, and let him tell her lies *ad libitum*. She said she liked him because he was such "a charming little beast." Alice Oates, of flagrant fame, allowed one of them out West to get into her good graces, and repented it, when she found that he disappeared sud-

THE ÆSTHETIC DRAMA.

denly one day with a lot of her jewels. The call-boy comes last in the list of attaches, but he is not at all least. If you believe all he tells you, like the usher, you will think him a great man, for he often boasts of playing poker with John McCullough, of taking Lotta out for a drive, or of rolling ten-pins with Salvini or some equally illustrious representative of the highest dramatic art. A call-boy gets about $10 a week, and in five cases out of ten he isn't worth ten cents.

CHAPTER XIV.

STAGE-STRUCK.

George McManus, treasurer of the Grand Opera House, St. Louis, in addition to being a good story-teller, is as fond of a practical joke as he is of three meals a day. During the season of 1880–81 George was at the box-office window, one day, looking out at the Dutch lager beer saloon across the street, and wondering why it was that people were so fond of "schooners," when a tall, thin, melancholy, Hamlet-like young fellow, with the air and clothes of rusticity, stalked slowly into the vestibule and up to the box-office.

"Well, sir," said George, as the young man got in front of the window and fixed his elbows on the sill.

"I want to be an actor," the young man began; "I kem here from Cahokia, a small place you may have heern about, and I'd like to go on the stage and play somethin' or other."

"Oh," answered George, smiling, "if that's all you want I can fix you. When do you want to begin?"

"I am ready to start in right neow," was the reply. "I told the old folks when I left the house last night that they needn't expect to see me ag'in 'til my name wuz on the walls an' the sides o' houses in letters more'n a yard long, an' I'm goin' to do it or die."

"I see you're made out of the right kind of stuff," said George, "and I'll give you a first-class chance. You're ambitious and you're lean — lean enough to

play Falstaff — and lean and ambitious people always make their mark. Have you ever heard of the lean and hungry Cassius? — I don't mean a depositor at the door of a busted bank, but the Cassius of 'Julius Cæsar.' I'll bet you feel just like him now; you look like him."

The Cahokian candidate for Thespian honors blushed.

"Well," the practical joker went on, "you can begin work this morning. The minstrels will be here in a few minutes for rehearsal, and they want a new box of gags. Go over to Harry Noxon, at the Comique, and ask him to give you a box of the best gags he's got. Tell him they're for me."

With a face wreathed in smiles the Cahokian *Cassius* stalked off towards the Comique while George went out and gathered in a few friends to enjoy the joke. The Cahokian went to the Comique, and Harry Noxon, understanding what was meant, gave the poor fellow a box half filled with bricks, and telling him that was all he had, directed him to go up to Pope's and ask for Ed. Zimmerman, who would fill the box for him. Shouldering the heavy load, the Cahokian moved bravely out towards Pope's, six and one-half blocks away. He was pretty tired when he got there. Ed. Zimmerman, in obedience to his request, sent the box around to the stage-door, where the carpenter removed the lid and added bricks enough to fill the receptacle. Nailing the lid on again the stage-struck youth was once more presented with it. It took a great deal of exertion for him to get the box to his shoulder, and when he had it there he staggered along under the load like a drunken man, to the Opera House seven blocks away. When he reached the Opera House, McManus said the Minstrels had changed their mind about using any new gags, and requested the Cahokian to carry

them over to the Olympic. The Cahokian looked at McManus, then took a woeful and weary look at the box, and, wiping the perspiration from his high forehead and thin face, he swung his slouch hat over his brow and remarked that he was tired.

"I say, Mister," he said, "if that's what a fellow's got to do to be a actor I'd sooner plow corn er run a thrashin'-masheen twenty-three hours out'n the twenty-four. I thought there was more fun in the business than carryin' around two or three hundred pounds of iron or somethin' like it, all day in the sun. I guess I'll throw up my engagement. Good-bye." And he strode out into the street, while George and his friends had a laugh that was as hearty as the lungs that led in the merriment were loud and strong.

There are a few young men and young ladies in this world who do not take the same view of the stage that the Cahokian took: they imagine there is a great deal of fun in being an actor or an actress, and that it does not require any special effort to arrive at the point where a person becomes a full-fledged professional. In this they are just as much mistaken as was the Cahokian, and sometimes, after they have gone into training for the profession, they tire of the hard work as readily almost as the stage-struck young farmer tired of carrying the box of "gags." There is a general wild desire among the young people of this country to make players of themselves. They dream that the stage is something like a seventh heaven where there is nothing but music and singing and golden glory forever — admirers, wealth, and an uninterrupted good time generally. They do not know anything about the long and toilsome hours of work and the comparatively poor pay that form the portion of all who are not at the top of the dramatic ladder. They never

pause to think if they are girls of the temptations into which they will be thrown, and of the slanders that will be uttered against their fair names upon the slightest provocation. All they see or know of theatrical life is its bright gilded side, the tinsel that looks valuable, the

KITTY BLANCHARD.

jewels that are paste, the silks and satins that are not what they seem, and the beautiful faces and bright smiles beneath which are wrinkles and toil-laden looks, when the actress is in her home plying her needle or studying

the long lengths that belong to her part. It is because people are so ignorant of the realities of dramatic life that so many become stage-struck and go around striking tragic attitudes and rating imaginary scenery in a rabid rant through Othello's address to the Senate, or Hamlet's scene with his mother in the latter's chamber. There are forty thousand young ladies in this land who want to be Mary Andersons, and as many more who think they can kick as cutely as Lotta, while one hundred thousand semi-bald young men imagine they could out-Hamlet Booth if they had a chance, or lift the mantle of Forrest from John McCullough if the latter dared enter the ring with them. A Louisville newspaper reporter gave a very humorous description of an epidemic of this kind that prevailed in Mary Anderson's home city some time ago. "One half the girls of the city," said the writer, "are stage-struck! — stark, staring stage-struck. Hundreds of residences have been converted into amateur play-houses, where would-be female stars tear their hair, rave and split the air with their arms, and stalk majestically across imaginary stages to the imaginary music of imaginary orchestras, and amid burst of imaginary applause and showers of imaginary boquets. In the dry goods stores young ladies rush up to the counters with inspiration dropping from their eyes in great hunks and in hollow tones command the affrightened clerk to —

"Haste thee, cringing vassal; pr-r-r-r-ro-duce and br-r-r-r-r-ing into our pr-r-r-r-r-esence thy sixty-five-cent hose!"

In the ice cream saloons the maidens shove the cooling cream into their lovely mouths and sweetly murmur to their escorts: —

"Now, by me faith, Orlando, but is't not a nectar

fit for the gods? Speak, me beloved; is't not a dainty dish that graces our festal board?"

And practical Orlando replies: —

"I bet you."

On the street-car the maiden stalks forward toward the driver and howls: —

"What, ho, there, charioteer, give me, I pray thee, diminutive coin for this one dollar bond an' I will upon the instant requite thee for thy services upon this journey."

When one of them catches a flea she holds the victim at arms' length and roars: —

"Ha-a-a-a! I have thee at last, vile craven. For many nights thy visits to me chamber have br-r-r-ought unrest. Now at la-a-st thou art in me clutches and I will shower vengeance upon thy thr-rice accursed head. Die, vile in-gr-rate, and may the seething fires of perdition engulf thy quivering soul forever-r-r-r!"

Then she opens her fingers a little to get a good squeeze at him and the flea hops out and goes home to tell its folks about it. They have got it bad and none of the old established methods of treatment seem to avail.

It is the very height of absurdity to see an amateur company on a stage, and particularly on the stage of a theatre. In the midst of the most solemn tragedy one is compelled to laugh at them. If they have on tights and trunks they try to get their hands into side pockets, and if they carry swords the weapon gets tangled in their legs, and ten to one after the blade has left its scabbard, the wearer will be unable to get it back again. Then the way they walk upon each other's heels, and tread upon each other's corns; jostle each other in the entrances and stick in their lines is enough to make one of the painted figures in the proscenium

arch tear itself out of its medalion frame and die from excessive laughter. More ludicrous even than their performance is the frantic rush a young amateur makes for the photograph gallery to have himself preserved as a courtier, and the equally rapid progress the young society lady makes in the same direction — anxious to have her picture taken no matter whether she plays a queen, a lady of honor, or a page in tights. She has no hesitancy in displaying her awkward limbs in a picture, although she would be ashamed to show her ankle in the parlor.

Sometimes, instead of being made the subject of a practical joke on the street, as was the Cahokian of whom I told the story at the opening of this chapter, the joke is carried even farther — the aspirant being taken to the stage to give a sample of his work. Occasionally the show is given to the people of the theatre only, and the victim is quietly let through a trap, or guyed unmercifully, until he is glad of an opportunity to make his escape. I was present on an occasion when an Illinoisan who had just graduated from college was allowed to go on the stage during a matinee performance, when the house was light, to speak his piece. He chose, of course, the selection he had inflicted on the suffering audience that attended the Illinois college graduating exercises. It was "The Warrior Bowed his Crested Head," a very dramatic recitation and a difficult one even for a good reader. The debutant was about eighteen years of age, tall, and manly looking. He came forward trembling, and did not attempt to proceed further than about twelve feet from the entrance, — making a school-boy bow he began. The audience wondered at the innocence and awkwardness of the entertainer who did not appear in the programme, but all soon understood the

MRS. LANGTRY, THE JERSEY LILY.

affair. The debutant had not reached the second line of the second verse, when bang came a pistol shot from the side of the stage. The speaker ducked his head, trembled a little more than before, but went on. Bang went another pistol shot, and again the speaker acknowledged receipt of a shock by twitching his head and knocking his knees together. Still he kept on reciting. Sheet-iron thunder rattled through the place, horns were blown, drums beaten, horse-rattles kept in motion and for more than half an hour pistol shots and flashes of fire kept coming from both sides of the stage. Still he spoke on, making gestures, twitching his limbs, and ducking his head until the last line was reached, — something about the hero's weapons shining no more among the spears of Spain, — when he bowed and retired hardly able to walk. He was an exception, however, to the general rule that stage-struck people are easily frightened out of their wits, under such circumstances, and displayed such perseverance that he was complimented by the audience that had scarcely heard a word of what he had said — a loud burst of applause following his exit, which was continued until he came forward again and by a bow acknowledged their kindness. He must have been a brave fellow, for next day he was around at the manager's office asking for an engagement

Managers are sometimes very cruel in their treatment of young people who are anxious to adopt the stage. I saw a newspaper item stating that at the Buckingham, a variety show in Louisville, a drop curtain was painted with the huge letters "N. G.," standing for "no good," and the manager ordered that this verdict be lowered in front of every performer who failed to show a fair degree of merit. It happened that the first to deserve this crushing verdict was a remarkably pretty

girl, and the audience sympathized with her. She had given an execrable dance, and was in the midst of a woeful recitation, when the "N. G." curtain was lowered. The audience demanded her reappearance and did not permit anybody else to perform until the police had arrested the more gallant and noisy among them.

Amateurs who have any money to mingle with their desire to go on the stage find ready takers. I could name several gentlemen who are now alleged professionals, with talents that are not even mediocre, who are tolerated in first-class company only because they pay for the privilege. One way a moneyed, stage-struck person has of getting before the public is to rent a theatre, and hire a company for a night or a week or a month, as the case may be. Society swells generally do this kind of thing, and they never succeed. Marie Dixon was, under another name, a fairly well-to-do, well connected and popular lady of Memphis, Tennessee. She was old enough to have a married son, but did not appear to be more than thirty-six years. Her family had been very wealthy before the war, but that event swept away their possessions, as it swept away the possessions of many others. She was educated and accomplished, but was stage-struck. She had appeared at several amateur concert entertainments in Memphis, and the local papers having complimented her, and her friends having remarked that she was intended for an actress, she boldly, but foolishly, resolved to become one. She made up her mind to rival Mary Anderson, and to overshadow the memory of Ristori and all the great queens of the stage that have made a place for themselves in dramatic history. She paid $2,000 for the use of a St. Louis theatre for six nights; she hired a very bad company

at, to them, very extravagant salaries; she bought a wardrobe larger and in some respects richer than that of any established star; then she came to St. Louis with her aged father, whose hopes and money were staked upon her; they put up at the Lindell Hotel, and having left Memphis amid a flourish of trumpets, they fondly expected a wilder flourish when they returned. Miss Dixon appeared before the St. Louis public for six nights, and was a failure. She was no actress. She was ashamed to return to Memphis, and at this writing is still absent from there. The father went home, and, I hear, died of a broken heart. Disappointed friends at first pitied, then laughed at this accomplished lady, whose only fault seems to be that she was one of the grand army of the stage-struck.

Miss Helen M. Lewis, a Charleston, South Carolina, heiress, who was anxious to become a Sarah Bernhardt or a Siddons, was taken in recently by an advertisement in a New York paper. The advertisement stated that a lady with a little capital was wanted to head a first-class dramatic combination, and that she might call at No. 602 Sixth Avenue, New York. Miss Lewis, who was without any training, answered the advertisement, and was told that $1,000 would be required to obtain the position, which was leading lady in the "Daniel Rochat" Combination, which was to begin its tour, by opening at the Boston Theatre. The negotiations were carried on with Maurice A. Schwab and Robert J. Rummel, who received $700 from Miss Lewis, and furnished her with an alleged instructor in the dramatic art. In order to be near the theatre Miss Lewis took rooms at the Revere House, Boston, where Schwab and Rummel also established themselves, and proceeded to study her part after engaging an alleged instructor recommended by Schwab.

After two or three weeks' standing off by the swindlers, who made constant demands on her for money for her wardrobe and other things, she chanced to call at the Boston Theatre to hear how the rehearsals of

MARIE PRESCOTT AS "PARTHENIA."

"Daniel Rochat" were progressing. She was told that there were no rehearsals in progress and learned that she had been swindled. Schwab and Rummel fled, leaving her to pay her hotel bill, but she had them arrested in New York, and both on trial were, I

think, convicted and sent to the penitentiary, where plenty more managers of their stripe should be.

Managers of what are known as "snap" companies are just as bad as Schwab and Rummel. They are glad to find some young lady or gentleman of means with lots of ready cash, and they do not hesitate to make victims even of professional people. The snap manager has no money of his own. He sits around a theatrical printing office all day, and pretends to be running a circuit of several towns. He watches his opportunity until a company comes along which he thinks he can take over to his villages. By false representations he manages to run up a big bill with the printer and to borrow money from the company, who go as far on his circuit as their means will permit, when the snap manager deserts them, leaving them to walk, or beg, or borrow their way home as best they can. Marie Prescott, who supported Salvini during his last American tour, and who is an actress of merit, was caught in the clutches of one of these managers at one time and was put in a pitiable plight. Other actresses of good reputation have accepted engagements from strange managers only to find themselves members of fly-by-night combinations, giving their services without even the show of a probability of ever receiving any salary.

Even so exalted a gentleman and eminent an impresario as Col. Mapleson is alleged to have brought a young girl from France promising he would make a fortune for her. The girl's father and mother accompanied her, and when the gallant colonel of Italian troupes failed to keep his contract with the sweet singer, the father became enraged and wanted to fight a duel with the military impresario. The family went back to France almost penniless.

The worst class of managers in the world are those who take advantage of the ambition of young girls to effect their ruin. In some of the variety theatres managers pay salaries to young ladies or introduce them to the stage for none other than a base and iniquitous purpose. Frightful stories of this kind have been told, and the success real managers have met with in this direction has caused numerous pretenders to arise, and has made the theatrical profession a bait to secure innocent girls for Western and Southern bawdy-houses, concert dives, and low dancing-halls. I read the following advertisement in the *Globe-Democrat* one morning: —

PERSONAL — Wanted, three or four young ladies to join a travelling company. Address Manager, this office.

I knew that reputable theatrical managers did not advertise in this style — indeed, they need not advertise at all, for there is always plenty of talent in the market — and came to the conclusion that the "Personal" was a veil to hide some piece of dirty work. Therefore I sat down, and, in varying feminine hands, wrote letters to the manager, asking for an opening. Two letters, with their corresponding answers, are here selected as specimens of the remainder, answers to all having been received. One of the applications ran as follows: —

ST. LOUIS, February 6, 1878.

MR. MANAGER: I want to adopt the stage; have appeared as an amateur, and will join you if I can learn. I am seventeen, a blonde, small, and my friends say I look well on the stage. I sing and perform on the guitar. I have a friend — a very pretty brunette — who is very anxious to go with me, but she has never acted. She is same age. Please let me know where I can see you,

if you have not already employed enough; but I must be particular, as my mother does not want me to go away. Address ETTIE HOLAN,
City Post-Office.

I will call at general delivery and get it.

The other was written in this strain and in these words: —

ST. LOUIS, February 6, 1877.

DEAR SIR: I saw your advertisement in this morning's *Globe-Democrat*, asking for three or four young ladies to join a travelling theatrical company, and as I am desirous of going on the stage, and am of good form and pretty fair appearance, and have a pretty good voice, I would wish to join your company. I have never appeared on any regular stage, but made several amateur appearances, which were pronounced very successful. I have an ambition for the stage, and think I would succeed. I am seventeen years of age, and medium height, with black hair and dark eyes, and am a tasty dresser. I hope you will not pass over my application, but will receive it favorably. Anxiously awaiting an early reply, I remain, respectfully yours, etc., LIZZIE HILGER.

P. S. —Address your reply to me to the post-office.

These and the others were all calculated to make the "manager" feel that he had captured a whole shoal of gudgeons. He would certainly reply to such unsophisticated notes as these, and he did. The letters were placed in the newspaper office box on Wednesday afternoon, and bright and early on Thursday morning, I went around to the post-office, presented my string of names, and met with no little opposition from the gentlemanly delivery clerk, at first, who naturally did not like to give an armful of mail for females to one who

was not a female. The situation was explained, however, and a half dozen rose-tinted envelopes, all properly backed and stamped, and each containing an epistle, was the result. They were opened one after another, and the rose-tinted and perfumed pages of each told, in a bold running hand exactly the same story — "pass the corner of Eighth and Locust Streets," at hours varying from noon to sundown on Thursday afternoon. It was just what had been expected. Ettie Holan, the petite blonde, who could play the guitar, was answered as follows: —

St. Louis, Mo., February 6, 1878.

Miss Ettie Holan: Your letter through the *G.-D.* at hand. We desire to engage several young ladies for the company now traveling, and among numerous applicants note yours, and think it possible to fix an engagement both for yourself and lady friend. As you are very particular about your folks, you might possibly object to coming to our office, so if you desire the engagement, please pass the corner of Locust and Eighth Streets with your lady friend about four (4) o'clock P. M. to-morrow (Thursday), the 7th.

Yours, respectfully, Harry Russell.

And Lizzie Hilger, with nothing to recommend her but a voice and figure that she had recommended herself, was encouraged in her ambitious aspirations in the following manner: —

St. Louis, Mo., February 6, 1878.

Miss Lizzie Hilger: Your favor at hand. Among numerous applicants I have remembered yours. We desire several young ladies to strengthen the company for our Chicago and Boston engagements, and desire to meet you personally, if possible, to-morrow afternoon. You may object to coming to our office, so

please pass the corner of Locust and Eighth Streets to-morrow afternoon (Thursday) about 2:30 (half-past two) o'clock.

Yours, respectfully, HARRY RUSSELL,
Manager.

Here then was the "manager's" little game. Of

MME. FANNY JANAUSHEK.

course Harry Russell was not the man's name at all, and of course he had no office to which either Miss Ettie Holan or Miss Lizzie Hilger, or any of the four

other girls who had applied for positions through me, "might object to coming," and of course he had nothing to do with strengthening any company's Boston or Chicago engagements. It was evident now, if not before, that the advertisement was a snare to trap the unwary and to pull the wool over the eyes of the innocent and unsuspecting, and I made up my mind to pay a visit to the locality named in the above letters.

A visit was paid, after dinner, to the proposed place of meeting. On the way up I met a detective friend, to whom my business was disclosed. The detective said he would go along and "spot" the fellow for future reference, and he did. Handsome Harry was found at his post, gazing up and down and across the street. He was standing in front of a saloon, on the corner, and a friend was hard by, who was to witness the success of the little game. Now and then a young lady passed to or from her home, and every time she came within sight "Manager" Harry began to prepare himself for the "mash." The coat front was readjusted, the shirt collar straightened up, the hat lifted from the head and the fingers run through the hair, and, as a last and finishing touch, the ends of his dainty moustache were fingered and carefully set away from his lips with a silk handkerchief. But here came the young lady. How he stared her in the face as she came towards him, ogled her when near by, and cast a disconsolate and disappointed look after her as she passed. Then he went back to communicate to his friend that she was probably "not the one," or that "maybe she weakened," and again took his stand to watch the next comer. This little business was gone through with as many times as there were young ladies who passed. At last it was evident to the two persons who had their eyes on Harry that he was beginning to weaken, and was

about to leave the place for a time at least. Under these circumstances there was only one thing to do — to go over and have a talk with him about the show business and make further engagements for the young ladies who were so anxious to blossom forth on the stage. The detective walked up to the man who was presumably Harry Russell.

"Do you know of a man named Harry Russell stopping about here?" asked the detective.

Harry was with his friend now, and both became almost livid in the face and were evidently taken back by the inquiry.

"N-no; w-what is he?" stammered out Harry.

"I believe he's manager of a theatrical company."

"Harry" had somewhat regained his mental equilibrium by this time, and answered positively: "Don't know him; never heard of him."

"Have you seen any man around in the past half hour? Russell made an engagement to meet me here."

"I haven't been here but about ten minutes," and away "Harry" and his friend sailed.

The detective and myself had been watching the pseudo manager for over two hours from a room across the street, and, of course, knew there was no truth in the measure he placed upon the time he was watching and waiting for victims that never came. He was not a theatrical man, but some dirty scamp.

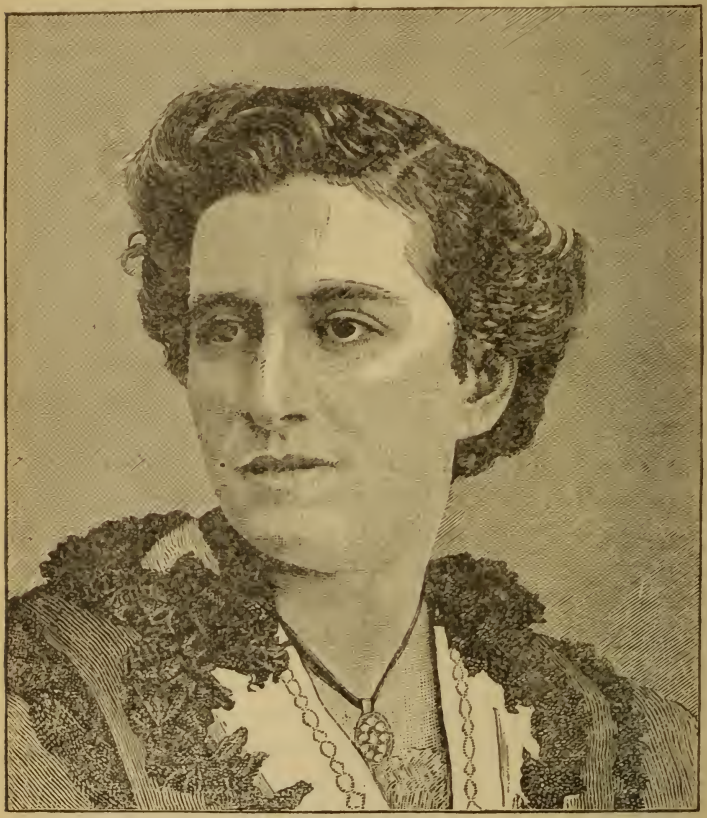
Some time ago an advertisement of the same character as the "Personal" quoted above, appeared in the Chicago papers, and many young ladies, anxious to adopt the stage as a profession, applied for positions. They obtained admission to the *quasi* manager, who, when no resistance was made by the applicants, shipped them to Texas and other Southern points,

where they found themselves perhaps penniless in the midst of a life of uncertainties, into which they had been duped and to which they had been sold. Many of these had been, and would still be, respectable young girls and ornaments to their respective home circles, were it not for the serpent with the fascinating eyes that peeped out at them from under the three or four lines in the advertising columns of that Chicago paper. Discoveries of the same kind were made in several cities of the East, and it is dreadful to contemplate the havoc which must have been wrought by this means, for surely many of the hundreds of really good girls, who are always sure to answer such an advertisement in the innocent belief that it may be the means of making Neilsons, Cushmans, Morrises or some other equally firmamentary individual in the galaxy of the stage of them, and who refused to be debauched, were sorely disappointed in the result of their apparent good fortune in obtaining the recognition of the "manager."

The following letter from a band of stage-struck young men of color is an extraordinary document, and may be taken as a sample of the letters received every day by theatrical managers: —

Kansas City, 1789 [1879], January 14. Mr. De Bar, Dear Sir, I take thes opportunity of witring you theas few lines to ask you for an engagement at the Orepry [Opera] house if you can as we would like to get it if we can. i and my trop can do a great meny performence on the stage. W. H. Terrell he can do the Iron Joyrl [iron jaw] performence and do a Jig Dance and a Clog and Double Song and Dance and other tricks. Mr. Benjermer Frankler [Benjamin Franklin] waltz With a pail of water on his head and plays the frence harp the sametime on the stage and laying down with it on his head and roal all over the

floor and Jump 6 feet hiagh in the air on hand and feet. allso and we have the Best french harp players in the world that ever plaid on one. and leaping through a hoop of fire same as a circus. If you can git it for



ROSE EYTINGE.

me pleas write soon and let me know. Sam Chrisman is one of my ateters. yours Truly, B. Franklin.

Excuse writing and paper. This is a Cold trop.

It is hardly necessary for me to say Ben De Bar did not give the "Cold trop" an engagement. Poor old Ben was dead at that time.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REHEARSAL.

When the seeker after histrionic honors has at last crossed the threshold of the stage, he or she will find it entirely different from the glitter and glory with which the imagination had clothed things theatrical. The first revelation made to new-comers in the profession is the rehearsal. This generally begins about ten A. M. and ends about two P. M. In the old days of stock companies, performers had more laborious work to perform than men who carry railroad iron out of, or into, steamboats. Often there were new plays every night, which meant new parts to be memorized, and rehearsals every day. Leaving the theatre at eleven P. M., about the usual hour of closing a performance at that time, the actor took his part with him, and instead of going to his bed, was obliged to sit up and study his lines — no matter how many lengths there were. Torn and worn out with his night's work on the stage, and the mental toil that followed, it was often already morning when the actor sought his couch. He was then obliged to be up in a few hours and at the theatre at ten. If he absented himself there was a fine that would materially reduce his already low salary. Where was the room for enjoyment for the actor or actress in those days? There was little opportunity given to anybody at all employed upon the stage to be of dissolute habits or to indulge in any of the excesses that pulpit-pounders and their intolerant and intoler-

able followers generally charged against the profession. These super-moral individuals could not make a distinction between the stage of the days of Mrs. Bracegirdle and Mistress Woffington, of Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Robinson, when filth and licentiousness prevailed because the public found no fault with it, and the same things were prevalent in ranks of the very best society. Now that we have travelling combinations, and that one part will last a man or woman who pays attention to business for a year or more, the profession is not so heavily taxed; still there is plenty of work, and there is little, if any, time to devote to any of the pleasures or excesses that prurient piety points out as the portion of players. But this is moralizing. Let us get back to the rehearsal. Less than ten years ago a rehearsal might be found going on in any theatre in the country between the hours of ten A. M. and two P. M. Now it is a rare thing to find a rehearsal except on Monday, and in the few cities where Sunday-night performances are given this day may be set apart, when the opening or first performance is on the same night. As travelling goes now, a company reaches a town either the night before, or the morning of the day for their initial entertainment. No matter what the time of arrival — unless it be, as often happens, that the company gets off the train and to the theatre fifteen minutes before the curtain is to go up — every member of the company will be expected at the theatre in the morning for rehearsal, not so much to go through their parts as to familiarize themselves with the entrances and exits and the general arrangement of the house. The stage manager is there and the orchestra is in its place. If it is comic opera there is a rehearsal of the music, and if it is one of the musico-farcical or burlesque pieces that were epidemic

during the past two seasons, the play will be rehearsed that the musicians may come in with their flare up at the proper time.

A rehearsal is calculated to take all the starch out of the ambition of a neophyte, and to drench his hopes in a sorrowful manner. The stage bereft of its flood of light, of its gorgeous color and wealth of splendor, is the darkest, dreariest, and most commonplace region in the world. The buzz of saw and the clatter of hammer are heard in all directions, while men in aprons, overalls, and greasy caps are making the saw-and-hammer noises, and others even less romantic are dragging about scenery or boxes; gas men are at work on the foot-lights, and there is noise and confusion enough to set a whole villagefull of sybarites crazy. Down in front a group of ladies and gentlemen are moving about and talking. These are the players — the people we saw the night before in rich attire, with glowing jewels and surrounded with all the magnificence, wealth could bestow or royalty command. Now, the king's crown is a black slouch hat and the royal robes are a dark sack coat and vest, light trousers, and white shirt with picadilly collar. The queen has a last-year bonnet on her head and a water-proof cloak envelopes her form. The other actors are also in every-day dress, some showing that their owners patronize first-class tailors and others that they have been handed down from the shelves of cheap ready-made clothing houses. The stage manager is pushing everybody around, and the actors and actresses are talking at one another in lines. Some have books of the play, for they are rehearsing, and all rattle over their lines as if running a race with a locomotive that is drawing Vanderbilt's special car over the road at its topmost speed. It is impossible to understand what they are saying, and

the on-looker would be willing to wager a $10 gold piece against a silver dime with a hole in it that the performers do not hear or understand each other. But a California journalist has written a very truthful

AGNES BOOTH.

and funny account of a rehearsal he attended in San Francisco. Olive Logan has it in her book, but it is so good I will make use of it again. Here it is: —

You may get as perfect an idea of a play by seeing it

rehearsed as you would of Shakespeare from hearing it read in Hindustani. The first act consists in an exhibition of great irritability and impatience by the stage manager at the non-appearance of certain members of the troupe. At what theatre? Oh, never mind what theatre. We will take liberties and mix them thus: —

Stage Manager (calling to some one at the front entrance): "Send those people in."

The people are finally hunted up one by one and go rushing down the passage and on to the stage like human whirlwinds.

Leading Lady (reading): "My chains a-a-a-a-a rivet me um-um-um (carpenters burst out in a tremendous fit of hammering) this man."

Star: "But I implore — buz-buz-buz — *never* — um-um" (great sawing of boards somewhere).

Rehearsal reading, mind you, consists in the occasional distinct utterance of a word, sandwiched in between large quantities of a strange, monotonous sound, something between a drawl and a buz, the last two or three words of the part being brought out with an emphatic jerk.

Here Th——n rushes from the rear: —

"Now my revenge."

Star (giving directions): "No, you Mrs. H—s—n, stand there, and then when I approach you, Mr. B—r—y, step a little to the left; then the soldiers pitch into the villagers and the villagers into the soldiers, and I shoot you and escape into the mountains."

Stage Manager (who thinks differently): "Allow me to suggest, Mr. B——s, that" — (here the hammering and sawing burst out all over the stage and drown everything).

This matter is finally settled. The decision of the

oldest member of the troupe having been appealed to, is adopted. Then Mr. Mc——h is missing. The manager bawls "Mc——h!" Everybody bawls, "Mc——h!" "Gimlet! Gimlet!" This is the playful rehearsal appellation for *Hamlet*. Gimlet is at length captured and goes rushing like a locomotive down the passage.

Stage Manager: "Now, ladies and gentlemen. All on!"

They tumble up the stage steps and gather in groups. H—l—n fences with everybody. Miss H—w—n executes an imperfect *pas seul*.

Leading Lady: "I-a-a-a-a love-um-um-um — and-a-a-a another — "

Miss H—l—y, Miss M—d—e, or any other woman: "This engage-a-a-a my son's um-um Bank Exchange."

A—d—n raises his hands and eyes to heaven, saying: "Great father! he's drunk!"

Leading Lady (very energetically): "Go not, dearest Hawes! The Gorhamites are a-a-a-um-um devour thee."

Mrs. S—n—s: "How! What!!"

Mrs. J——h: "Are those peasantry up there?"

Boy comes up to the stage and addresses the manager through his nose: "Mr. G., I can't find him anywhere."

H——y J——n: "For as much as I" — (terrible hammering).

Nasal boy: "Mr. G., I can't find him anywhere."

L—c—h: "Stop my paper!"

Manager: "Mr. L., that must be brought out very strong; thus, *Stop my paper!*"

L—c—h (bringing it out with an emphasis which raises the roof off the theatre): "STOP MY PAPER!"

The leading lady here goes through the motion of

fainting and falls against the star, who is partly unbalanced by her weight and momentum. The star then rushes distractedly about, arranging the supernumeraries to his liking. Ed—s and B—y walk abstractedly to and fro. S—n—r dances to a lady near the wings. These impromptu dances seem to be a favorite pastime on the undressed stage.

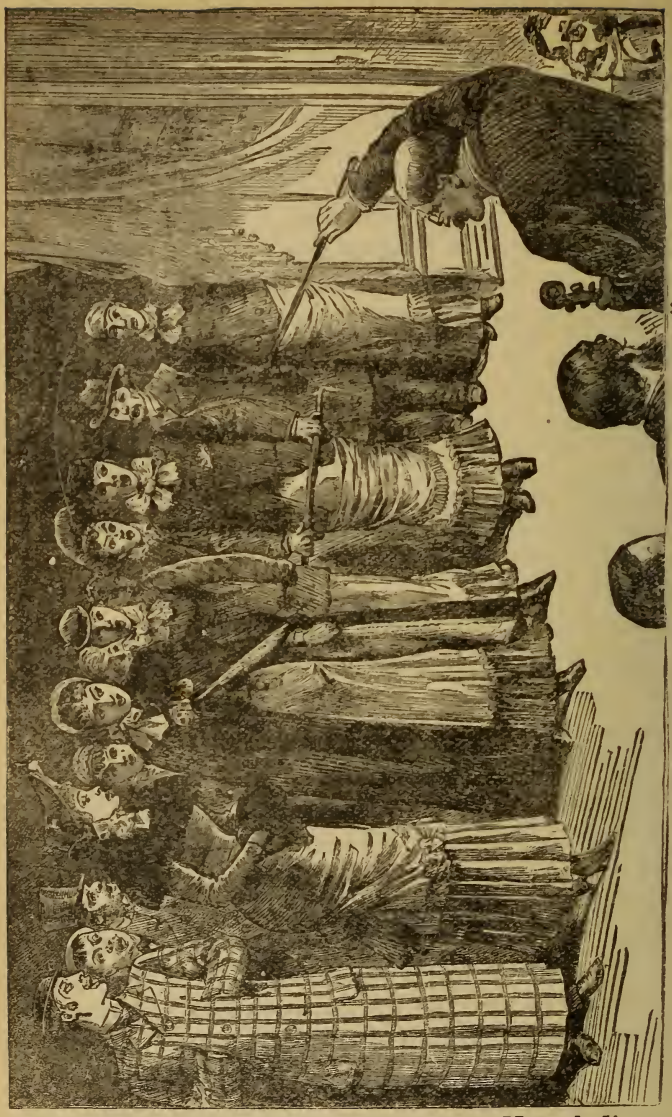
Second Lady: "Positively a-a-a- Tom Fitch um-um amusing a-aitch a-aitch a-aitch!"

It puzzled me for a long time to find out what was meant by this repetition of a-aitch. It is simply the reading of laughter. A-aitch is where "the laugh comes in." The genuine pearls of laughter are reserved for the regular performance. Actresses cannot afford to cachinate during the tediousness and drudgery of rehearsal. Usually they feel like crying.

Stage Manager: "We must rehearse this last act over again."

Everybody at this announcement looks broadswords and daggers. There are some pretty pouts from the ladies, and some deep but energetic profanity from the gentlemen.

The California journalist has just about done justice to the subject. I have attended rehearsals when it was utterly impossible to comprehend whether they were reading Revelations or going through Mother Goose's melodies. Drilling the chorus for opera is attained by the same trials and tribulations as rehearsals for dramatic representations. The leader grows furious at the surrounding noise, and the distractions that members of the chorus give themselves up to. It is a bad thing to get them together at first and harder still to keep them together afterwards. When the leader with an atmosphere of the kindest humor surrounding his smooth head holds his baton aloft imagin-



"NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ALL TOGETHER."

ing that everything is all right, says: "Now, ladies and gentlemen, all together," he gracefully lowers his arm, but suddenly arises in an angry mood, for they are not

all together. About one-half the throng begin, and the other half loiter behind to drop in at intervals. And so it goes from act to act until the opera is finished. The singers are in street dress and the shabbiest of garments brush against the most stylish. In rehearsing grand opera only one act is taken at a time,

TRAINING BALLET DANCERS.

and the scenes presented, with the mellifluous Italian and the sweet-scented garlic floating around the stage, are picturesque to the eye, charming to the ear, and simply entrancing to the nose. The principals rehearse sitting.

Ballet dancers have as hard work, if not harder than

any other class in the profession. They must rehearse or practice daily, and for hours and hours at a time. The *maitre* is there with cane and eye-glass, with velvet coat and lavender trousers, to show them the motions, and line after line the strength and limberness of the limbs of the *corps de ballet* are tested. From the premiere who sits with sealskin sack over her stage costume with her pet dog by her side down to the latest acquisition to the *maitre's* (the ballet master's) corps, all must be on hand to rehearse with or without music. In the latter instance the steps are slowly but carefully gone through. Not only is there a day rehearsal, but there is private individual rehearsal of the steps at night previous to going on the stage; for there is much grace in a *corps de ballet*, and no girl in love with her art wishes to be considered awkward or in the rear; hence the emulation that exists, and the private rehearsals in the dressing-room. Many of these ballet-dancers live poor lives, getting salaries which after buying their stage dresses leaves them little for the cupboard and very little to waste upon street costumes. Some are frail, and have admirers whose purse-strings they pull wide open, and are therefore able to rustle around in silks and sport rich golden and jewelled ornaments, while the honest girls must sup at home on crusts and share the opprobrium their shamless companions bring on the entire class. Ballet girls everywhere have a throng of giddy, dissipating male followers, and those who resist the temptations thrown in their way are deserving praise rather than condemnation.

Just as the Spanish have their Mauzai, the Hindoos their Nautch girls, the Japanese that remarkable dance travellers have written so frequently and so much about, and each country its own particular sway or

Zulu
BALLET
Highlander
Scotch Lassie
Japanese
Manzai
Spanish Gipsies

whirl, so this country seems to have taken kindly to the ballet. When a ballet dancer — one of the famous dancers of the beginning of the century — presented herself for the first time to an Albany, New York, audience, the ladies rushed from the stage and there was almost a panic. But it did not take long to accustom the Albanians to the undraped drama, and they are as fond of it now as any of the rest of the not over-scrupulous people of the country. Not so many years ago, there was a ballet every night in the first-class variety theatres; now there are few, except in the East, that have this feature, and for this reason — the abandonment of it in the West and South — the people who draw conclusions from everything they see and hear cry out that the ballet is dying out. This is not so. The ballet has been dropped from the list of attractions in the West, because the managers thought it too costly an institution for them to carry and not because the people did not want it. Some of the best paying theatrical investments of the day are based upon the fascinating and drawing qualities of a displayed female limb. Burlesque with its blonde attributes kept the country in a rage for many years, and the reason why it is so rare now is that comic opera and the minor musical attractions of the *quasi* legitimate stage have usurped its principal feature — the leg show — and under the cover of art get the patronage of people who would shun burlesques, and at the same time supply the demand of about three-fourths of the male persuasion who are as fond of as much anatomy in pink tights as the law will allow them. If any one thinks the ballet is on the decay just let him wait until such an attraction is announced in his neighborhood and then stand back and count as the bald-headed brigade goes to the front.

And for those who take any interest in the ballet, or care to hear anything about the women who have become famous as dancers, the following bit of history which I found in Gleason's *Pictoral* for 1854 will be very agreeable reading: "A recent performance at her majesty's theatre in London has been signalized by an event unparalleled in theatrical annals, and one which, some two score years hence, may be handed down to a new generation by garrulous septuagenarians as one of the most brilliant reminiscences of days gone by. The appearance of four such dancers as Taglioni, Cerito, Carlotta Grisi and Lucile Grahn, on the same boards and in the same *pas*, is truly what the French would call "*une solemnite theatrale*," and such a one as none of those who beheld it are likely to witness again. It was therefore as much a matter of curiosity as of interest, to hurry to the theatre to witness this spectacle; but every other feeling was merged in admiration when the four great dancers commenced the series of picturesque groupings with which this performance opens. Perhaps a scene was never witnessed more perfect in all its details. The greatest of painters, in his loftiest flights, could hardly have conceived, and certainly never executed, a group more faultless and more replete with grace and poetry than that formed by these four danseuses. Taglioni in the midst, her head thrown backwards, apparently reclining in the arms of her sister nymphs. Could such a combination have taken place in the ancient palmy days of art, the pencil of the painter and the pen of the poet would have alike been employed to perpetuate its remembrance. No description can render the exquisite, and almost ethereal grace of movement and attitude of these great dancers, and those who have witnessed the scene, may boast of

having once, at least, seen the perfection of the art of dancing so little understood. There was no affectation, no apparent exertion or struggle for effect on the part of these gifted artistes; and though they displayed their utmost resources, there was a simplicity and ease, the absence of which would have completely broken the spell they threw around the scene. Of the details of this performance it is difficult to speak. In the solo steps executed by each danseuse, each in turn seemed to claim pre-eminence. Where every one in her own style is perfect, peculiar individual taste alone may balance in favor of one or the other, but the award of public applause must be equally bestowed; and the *penchant* for the peculiar style, and the admiration for the dignity, the repose and the exquisite grace which characterize Taglioni, and the dancer who has so brilliantly followed the same track (Lucile Grahn), did not prevent the warm appreciation of the charming archness and twinkling steps of Carlotta Grisi, or the wonderful flying leaps and revolving bounds of Cerito. Though each displayed her utmost powers, the emulation of the fair dancers was unaccompanied by envy. Every time a shower of boquets descended on the conclusion of a solo *pas* of one or the other of the fair *ballerine*, her sister dancers came forward to assist her in collecting them. The applause was universal and equally distributed. This, however, did not take from the excitement of the scene. The house, crowded to the roof, presented a concourse of the most eager faces, never diverted, for a moment, from the performance; and the extraordinary tumult of enthusiastic applause, joined to the delightful effect of the spectacle presented, imparted to the whole scene an interest and excitement that can hardly be imagined by those not present."

CHAPTER XVI.

CANDIDATES FOR SHORT CLOTHES.

About a week before the date of the opening of a spectacular play at any metropolitan theatre an advertisement reading something like this appears in the want columns of the daily papers: —

WANTED — Three hundred girls for the ballet in "The Blue Huntsman," at Bishop's Theatre. Call at stage-door at ten A. M. Monday.

In this simple advertisement the theatrical instinct which prompts the press agent to exaggerate facts concerning his attraction is very beautifully displayed. The number of girls wanted is probably not in excess of fifty; still the local manager does not care to waste money upon this little advertisement without getting an advertisement for his show out of it. Monday morning brings a number of applicants — not as large a number as such an advertisement would have attracted in former years, but still enough to meet the demands of the ballet-master, who has come on ahead of his troupe to select the girls and give them a little training, just sufficient training to tone down the rough edges of their awkwardness and to drill them in the marches in which they will be expected to participate. The girls, as they come in singly or in pairs — shyly and coyly approaching the stage-door, but taking courage at the sight of the others who are there before them — are told to come around again in the afternoon, or perhaps the following morning to meet the ballet.

There doesn't seem to be any particular choice in getting up a ballet of this kind. A round-shouldered, broad-waisted, squint-eyed, red-headed girl has her name entered on the stage manager's book as readily as the charming little blonde who looks as if she belonged to the upper walks of life, and appears many degrees more accomplished, graceful, and intelligent than the strabismal, carroty-headed creature who has preceded her. When all have been registered, up to the requisite number, some of the astonished and delighted candidates, after having learned that they will receive $4 or $6, or, maybe, $8, for the week's services, lose themselves in the intricacies of the scenery and wonder at the beauties of the new world in which they find themselves. Their next visit brings them into the presence of the ballet master, who regards them physically, scrutinizing each as the name is called, and seldom rejecting any not absolutely deformed who appear before him. They are sent to the costumer's and their work begins at once. All they are required to do is to run up and down or around the stage in drills and marches, or to group themselves in heart-rending tableaux at intervals during the dance. The best — that is, the girls who are quick to perceive and swift to accomplish the commands of the master, are selected for leaders and for the principal work in this subordinate branch of the spectacle. Day after day they are drilled until the night of the first performance arrives, when, often in tights that do not fit them, in costumes that are wrinkled and dirty, they flash in all their awkwardness and gloominess upon the scene, to be laughed at, and to detract from instead of adding to the beauty of the spectacle.

A newspaper writer of experience in this line says: Few of those who observe and admire the graceful

attitudes, easy movements, and picturesque evolutions of the well-trained chorus or ballet in an opera have any adequate conception of the amount of practice and hard work necessary for the stage of perfection arrived at. A number of years ago, when ballet girls were in greater demand than at present, an advertisement inserted in New York papers or those of any other large city for material to fill up the *corps de ballet* would bring in applicants by dozens, and sometimes even by hundreds. The same is true in a less degree to-day, but at that time the wages paid to working girls were far more meagre than at the present time, and the few dollars per week to be obtained in the theatre was a princely sum by comparison, and, though the engagement be but a few weeks, the opportunity was gladly accepted.

The great majority of these applicants come from the lower working class, who are induced by pecuniary motives alone to exhibit themselves. They show in their faces and forms the traces of hard work and poor living, and an expert master of the ballet has need of all his skill to train them and dispose them on the stage so that their natural disadvantages of form may be kept as much as possible from public view. Now and then, however, there is a case where the glamour of the stage has so fascinated girls in better circumstances that they are ready to begin at any round of the ladder in a profession that seems so entirely imbued with roseate tints. It is the exception, and not the rule, for these to persevere; for, when brought face to face with the stern realities of the case, their ardor is dampened, the world seems hollow, "their dolls are stuffed with sawdust," and they are prepared to cry out *vanitas vanitatum*, and enjoy the rest of their stage experiences from the other side of the foot-lights.

These girls vary somewhat in age, but the majority of them are not above twenty, as a general rule. In making an application, they present themselves first to the stage manager. He takes note of their age, size, appearance and general contour of figure, and if he be favorably impressed sends them to the costumer. He, in his turn, hands them over to the women in his employ. There they are compelled to strip and undergo a complete examination of their limbs and form, and on the physical examination depends their acceptance or rejection.

In companies where the ballet girls are simply female supernumeraries and do nothing but march about while the danseuse and coryphees engage the attention of the audience, any extended amount of training is not necessary. Care is only taken to obtain girls of ordinarily fair physique and teach them to march correctly with the music. But even this is no small task.

These girls are naturally fitted for anything but this business, and it is ludicrous to observe the positions they assume and the gait they adopt. Impressed with the idea that they must act and walk differently from their usual custom, they twist their bodies and stalk about in a manner that is beyond description. These improvised ballets generally present an exhibition of stiffness and awkwardness at the first public appearance ; but that is not to be compared with the ungainly antics of a first rehearsal. In cases where greater pains are taken, and where the ballet girls go through many intricate evolutions, the rehearsals are continued daily, when possible, for a period of six or eight weeks, and some idea of the trials of a ballet master may be gathered from the contrast of the first rehearsal and the first performance.

A gentleman of long experience in theatrical mat-

ters says in a talk with an interviewer: "Well, I should think I ought to know something about ballet girls. Why, when I used to be at the Old Comique they were as plentiful as supers and used to appear as peasant girls in the regular drama.

"The rehearsals would be frightfully confusing to an outsider. During the last rehearsal, before a piece of this kind is put on, the stage looks like a perfect pandemonium. The chorus is being put through its final drill on one side, the actors are practising their entrances, exits, and cues on the other; behind, the scene painter and his assistants are daubing away, and the trap man and gas man are both working away in their line."

DRILLING FOR THE CHORUS.

"What kind of girls were they for the most part?"

"Oh, they came out of factories and all that; they could make from $6 to $8 a week on the stage, a good deal better than they could do at their old business. We used to have such a lot of applicants then we could pick out a pretty good crowd. Some of them were very nice, respectable girls, but the associations ruined most of them. A good many of them were rather fly when they first came in, and besides being crooked would put on any amount of lug among their companions outside. After playing in the ballet two or three weeks for $6 or $7 a week, they would go around and say that they were actresses, playing an engagement at the Opera House, but they didn't know exactly

how long they should stay there. I wouldn't be at all surprised if they talked about starring it in another season; that's what all these fly-by-nights at the theatres do now. Why, do you know I have had people come to me and ask what part Miss So-and-So was taking, and on looking into the matter I would find that she was a ballet girl."

"Can't you tell me of some cases of girls who have a little romance about their history?"

"Well, possibly, but to one behind the scenes there is little enough of the romantic, I can tell you. I remember another case of a girl, one of the prettiest and best behaved we had — quite a modest little thing, in fact. But she got picked up by a middle-aged rake, and went to the bad. I do not know her whole story, but I know she used to meet this fellow after the performance very often. After a time she stated in confidence to one of her companions that she was married to him, and I have no doubt that she thought she was. She left the theatre after a few weeks and went to live with him. But I guess it didn't last long, for I saw her several years afterwards in one of the lowest travelling companies I know of, as vile and broken-down a wreck as you ever saw. If there is any romance in the lives of these girls, this is generally the style of it."

"Do these girls ever rise in the profession?"

"Oh, yes, some of our best actresses rise from the ranks. It would make a cat laugh, though, to see the first time they have a little speaking part in a regular drama. A girl can get along all right as long as her individuality is concealed in the ranks, but when she has to step to the front and say a few words, she waltzes up as though she was walking on eggs. She looks as if she would like to fall through the stage,

swallows and hesitates, and puts you in doubt as to whether you ought to laugh or pity her."

Here is a writer who takes another view of the affair: "To the uninitiated male citizen the period of supreme interest in affairs behind the scenes is the period of a grand ballet or spectacular show, where a hundred or two girls, who have undergone an examination of their faces, shoulders and limbs, and been accepted as presentable upon the stage, don tights and make their bow to the public. It is not always easy to secure the required number of girls who have the requisite qualifications for an appearance in tights. Girls who have never been on are extremely bashful about making their first appearance. The majority of the girls who answer the call for 'ladies for the ballet' are shop girls, girls who take work to their homes, girls suddenly thrown out of employment, poor girls who have no other way of honestly earning a dollar. There are a few who have been in the ballet a number of times before. They have come to look upon it very much as a business. They knit and sew and crochet and do fancy-work behind the scenes during the stage waits. Their pay is liberal compared with what they can earn even in ways that are considered more respectable, and they have the novelty and excitement, which, of course, are something of an attraction in themselves. Considerable judgment has to be exercised in the selection of those who aspire to the costume of a pair of tights and trunks or a gauze dress. It is a lamentable fact that all ladies are not plump and symmetrical, and for those lacking these charms there is no door to the ballet stage. Once accepted as a constituent part of a pageant which is to disport itself before the foot-lights, the *figurante* has a wide field for conquest open to her. It's man's weak-

ness to be forever 'getting gone' on the favorites of the foot-lights, to believe them all beautiful and luscious as they seem from the front of the house. And so it is that the watchman at the stage-door and call-boys divide between them many a dollar for carrying in *billet-doux* from the great army of mashed masculines. 'Another sucker dead gone,' mutters the call-boy as he pockets his liberal fee as mail-carrier. Perhaps the fair object of the masher's admiration 'won't have it,' but there are among her sisters those who, to a promisingly liberal and attractive stranger, would not let the lack of an introduction stand in the way of their graciousness. 'Sh,' they say to the call-boy. 'Sh! Don't say a word. Tell him we'll see him later. Look for us at the stage-door when our act is over.'"

THE "SUCKER."

And now let us see how they do these things in France, where the cancan flourishes and the Jardin Mabille, with its high kickers, is the temple towards which pleasure-seeking pilgrims bend when they visit their Mecca — La Belle Paris. A visitor to the dancing green-room of the Grand Opera, there, will find that at night it is brilliantly lighted, and the effect of the gas-jets is greatly increased by the numerous large mirrors which almost conceal the walls. In front of each of these mirrors stands a wooden post a little higher than one's waist, and before a dancing girl sets off, she raises one foot after the other until she

places it horizontally on one of these posts, where she keeps it for some time, then quitting this position and taking hold of the post with one hand she practices all her steps, and after having in this way "set herself off," she waters the floor with a handsome watering-pot, and before the large mirrors, which reach down to the mop-board, she goes through all the steps she is about to dance on the stage. The leading dancing girls commonly wear old pumps and small linen gaiters, very loose, in order to avoid soiling their stockings or stocking-net. When the call-boy gives his first notice, they hasten to throw off their gaiters and put on new pumps, chosen for their softness and suppleness, whose seams they have carefully stitched beforehand. The call-boy appears at the door, "Mesdemoiselles, now's your time! the curtain is up!" and the flock of dancing girls hasten to the stage. Among the Parisian ballet corps one sees the strangest vicissitudes of fortune, the most wonderful ups and downs of life. Some, who yesterday were glad to receive the meanest charity of their comrades, who joyfully accepted old dancing pumps, and wore them for shoes, and faded bonnets and thrice-mended clothes, appear to-day in lace, silks, cashmeres, with coachman, valet, carriage and pair. The sufferings, the privations, the fatigue, and the courage of these poor girls ere the miserable worm, the chrysalis, is metamorphosed into the brilliant butterfly, cannot be conceived. Bread and water support the life of more than half of them; many would be glad to feel sure of it regularly twice a day. A great number who live three or four miles from the Grand Opera trudge that distance almost shoeless to their morning dancing lesson, rehearsals, and evening performances, and on their return home, long after midnight, in the summer's rains and the winter's

snows, nothing buoys them up but the fond hope, often delusive, that the future has a brighter and better time in store for them.

The Nautch dancers, mentioned in the preceding chapter, are consecrated to the temple from childhood, and the graceful and fascinating poses to which the people of this country have been introduced by an enterprising American, are portions of their sacred dances before the shrines of their dizzy deities. I think four of these girls came to this country originally, and all but one died. Still, there were forty so-called Nautch dancers put upon the variety stage and in specialty troupes, ordinary but clever American ballet girls being painted for the occasion, and dressed in a semi-oriental costume. They made no pretensions to do the Nautch dance, in which the swaying of the body, keeping time with the feet, and howling a lugubrious hymn are the features, there being no hopping or whirling around; but the fraudulent Nautch girls of the specialty troupes pirouetted and pranced in the steps of the old-time ballet, with which we all ought to be familiar if we are not.

CHAPTER XVII.

TRAINING BALLET DANCERS.

"Well, now, I don't think that's so awful hard," said a fellow knight of the pencil, one evening as we both leaned upon the rear row of chairs in the old Theatre Comique at St. Louis, since destroyed by fire, and bent our heads forward in an inquisitive look at the ballet of "The Fairy Fountain," or something of that sort. The remark was meant to apply to the evolutions of the premiere as she spun around on one toe and threw a graceful limb up towards the roof of the house every time she gave a whirl.

"If you don't," said I, "you just try it once, and you'll find out exactly how hard it is."

I had made this retort wildly and without knowing, myself, anything much about the difficulties of ballet dancing. It dawned on me that here was an excellent field for inquiry, so having obtained the permission of Manager W. C. Mitchell, who was running the Comique, to go behind the scenes to interview the ballet master; next evening found me early at the stage door. I was soon inside picking my way through the labyrinth of scenery, stage properties, scene shifters, supers, actors and people generally who crowd and jostle each other in this mimic world, and I was in imminent danger every now and then of an *impromptu* debut before the public, and of finding myself standing figuratively on my head before an unappreciative audience. At last the ballet master — Sig. J. F. Car-

della, a thin, wiry man who seemed to be in the decline of life — was found in his tights, leaning in an easy attitude against one of the "wings."

"*Bona sera, Signor*," I said in the best Italian I could muster.

"*Grazia*," returned the *maitre* in the most welcoming manner in the world, as he invited me to a quiet corner where we sat down on a cracker-box.

The object of the visit was briefly explained, and Sig. Cardella rattled off his answers in a ready and intelligible manner, the sweet Italian accents falling from his tongue with the same rapidity and precision that he twinkled his feet in the ballet when occasion required. He said he had made his first appearance in the ballet twenty years before, when he was twenty years of age. He had been put in training, like other children, at the age of twelve years, in the Theatre La Scala — the government school — which has given the world so many famous dancers. Here he remained eight years.

"Children," said Cardella, "are admitted to this school as early as ten years and as late as twelve, and there is a regular routine of study that cannot be finished in less than eight years. It is long and arduous, and especially difficult when it is understood that pupils in this country arrive at stage honors in an immensely less time, in fact in as many months as we are required to put in years of study in the old country."

"I suppose La Scala is under the tuition of the very best masters," said I.

"Oh yes, indeed," responded the *maitre de ballet*, assuringly; "my first teacher was the celebrated Blozis, and after him Ousse, both French, and both great masters."

"But old?"

"Yes, old; but they had their stage triumphs, and the recollection of these kept their limbs strong and

DONNA JULIAS' EYES.

their joints almost as supple as they had been in their younger years, when they themselves went forth from

La Scala as premieres, to win the applause of the public."

"Boys and girls are admitted to La Scala?"

"Boys and girls; but all must pass a physical examination just as applicants for army service are required to do. If they are fortunate in having been endowed by nature with health and symmetry of form they are received into the school and enter at once upon its rigorous course of training. Oh, I tell you a ballet school is not the same here as it is in the old country. There must be perfect silence; not a word from the moment the master appears before the line of pupils, and after that nothing but the motions of the hundred or more bodies and the beating of the master's stick upon the floor."

"How long must they practice each day?"

"Well, before they are supposed to enter the academy at all, they must have had one or two years' practice outside. In the academy they have four hours' practice under the direction of the master every day; but many of them do more work than this, especially the most ambitious. I used to practice from eight to twelve hours daily, and even after having left the academy I kept up my daily exercise for increasing the limberness of the joints and the toughness of the cartilages. The more practice, the nearer perfection."

"I suppose the pupils are divided into classes, are they not?"

"Yes; we have four lines of dancers in Italy. You have only three here. We place our coryphees farthest off from the premiere; you put them alongside. The beginners at La Scala go into the coryphee class, from which they are gradually advanced to the *secunda lina*, then to the *prima lina*, and, after-

(255) OBERON AND TITANIA.

OBERON: — What thou see'st when thou dost wake
Do it for thy true love take.
Midsummer Night's Dream, ACT, *II.*, *Scene 3.*

wards, to solo parts, when they practically become premieres."

"But eight years," I suggested, "is a long time to be working without any return in the shape of either money or glory?"

"Ah, there you are mistaken," Cardella answered, pleased to find that newspaper men sometimes make mistakes. "The pupils at La Scala are paid something from the time they enter the academy. They first, while mere coryphees, get thirty francs a month; in the second line, sixty francs; in the third, eighty; and when advanced to solo parts, two hundred francs a month. At this they stop until they finish their schooling, when they take places in the principal theatres, make the usual tour of the provinces and of the continent, and finally settle down, if they have not become famous, to some solid competency, just as I have done myself."

"So much for the dancing boys and girls of Italy; but how about the ballet in this country?"

"Oh, it is nothing like what Europe produces. You have no schools here except the theatres, and girls when they come to learn the ballet, as they have often came to me, ask: 'Do you think I can dance in a week or two?' It is absurd the way they want to do. Why, in my country I practised for eight years before I would be allowed to appear publicly in the theatre, and had practised two years before that at home, and yet these American girls think they can become good dancers in a week or two."

"What do you say to such applicants?"

"I say, 'No, you can't dance in a week or two, nor in a month or two; but if you want to practice for several months I can place you on the stage.' And I say this because I know American girls can make good

dancers if they are in earnest and apply themselves hard; they can make passable ballet girls even if they give only a fair share of their attention to the study."

"What do you think of the American ballet?"

MEASURING FOR THE COSTUME.

"It cannot be good, of course, as long as the public does not give it the attention and patronage it requires to make it good. In the old country the ballet is everything; in this it is comparatively nothing. They

make it subservient to everything else on the stage. Managers do not care to pay for good troupes, and the troupes are consequently small and poor."

"But is there not plenty of employment for good ballet dancers?"

"Always. Each company has few that can be ranked as soloists, and this is because good dancers are not numerous. As I have suggested before, the American girl is not sufficiently ambitious in this line; their stage yearnings are mostly for speaking parts on the dramatic stage, and they are not very devout worshippers at the shrine of Terpsichore."

"How are American ballet girls paid?"

"Pretty well; but nothing like what they got before the war. Madame Gallati, who was my wife, before the rebellion, never got less than $150 a week, and after the war was paid $100. Premieres now do not get more than $75, and they are in very good luck when they get that much. The coryphees and others get from $35 a week down as low as $15. And out of this they must furnish their own wardrobes. They must lay out from $5 a week upwards for their stage clothes, and when a ballet is on that requires rich dressing the wardrobes may exceed their whole week's salary; but then, you know, they can prepare for an emergency of this kind by laying by a portion of the salary of the weeks in which no new ballet is brought out. Some of the ballets run for a month, but the usual run is two weeks."

"The *maitre* does not always dance?"

"No, he dances very seldom; but he earns his money though. He is kept busy two or three hours every day, Sunday included, teaching the old and young ideas of the ballet, how to shoot out their limbs, pose, pirouette, etc. It requires all the time

I can give to it to prepare a new ballet. Just as soon as a new one is put on the stage I begin to train the girls in another one, and this training is kept up until the day before the novelty is to be presented to the public. During this time of preparation I have the entire troupe on the stage two hours every morning, except matinee days, when, of course, there is no rehearsal. I show them the steps and they have to practice them. They are supposed to practice some at home, but, of course, the majority of them never do so."

"Have you many applicants now-a-days?"

"Not very many. Once in a while a girl or two will apply, but nearly all of them are unworthy in point of physique to be received, and so are sent away. I do not care so much for nice features, for the ugliest can be embellished sufficiently to look handsome before the foot-lights but good forms are indispensable, and particularly strong, symmetrical limbs. The applicants come from all grades and classes of life, and not a few are young girls of good but obscure connection, who have ambition to win glory and money and all that sort of thing from the public, and who fondly imagine that the ballet girl lives a butterfly existence, instead of being the hardworking, temptation-beset creature that she really is."

"And they all want to get on the stage in a very short time?"

"Yes, the invariable question is, 'Can I dance in a few weeks?' and then they want me to show them the 'steps' and to let them try to duplicate them. I tell them there is no use; if they want to dance they must, as the Irishman says, begin at the beginning. You can't know music without learning the notes; you can't read without knowing the A B C; and so with

(260) M. B. CURTIS, IN SAM'L OF POSEN.

the ballet, you can't dance without first having acquired its alphabet."

"How do you generally start a pupil out?"

"They have got to go to what we call the 'sideboard' practice first; that is, they must take hold of something for a rest, and go through the first five steps"—and here the *maitre* got up from the cracker-box, and taking hold of a "wing," placed his feet heel to heel, turned them out straight without bending the knees into an unsightly attitude, and said this was the first step; the four others were much the same as the attitudes taken at different times by elocutionists, one foot being pushed forward and then another. "Then I show them how to do this," and he began twisting one leg after another backward and forward until I thought he would twist both off, but he didn't. "After that," continued Sig. Cardella, "which in this country takes about a month, but in La Scala takes six months, I begin to show them a step or two at a time, and gradually lead them up until they know a little."

"But now and then we see a very fresh and green foot, if I may use the expression, on the stage."

"Oh, of course; we've got to make up a fair number for a troupe sometimes, and I then allow a girl to go on, whom I think smart enough not to make a fool of herself. You see although the American girl is smart and sharp, and pretty original in many other things, she is entirely imitative in dancing. She watches the other girls, and although she may not even be fairly grounded in the fundamental principles of ballet dancing, she frequently faces an audience and does well—sometimes astonishingly well in fact. Some of these girls climb up out of the ranks very fast; others who are lazy and give too much time to flirting and drinking wine, remain in the same line, usually the last,

for years, and are really in a ballet master's way all the time."

"How are ballet girls as a class?"

"Some of them," said Cardella, with a shake of his head and an expression of pity on his face, "are a little fond and foolish at times."

"And they have their admirers who bother them, in and out of the theatre, and send them pretty presents, big boquets and such?"

A PREMIERE BEFORE THE AUDIENCE.

"Oh well, now, I know very little about that. Some of them have families to support, and manage to wear better clothes and more jewelry than their salaries could pay for. I could tell you lots of funny incidents about ballet girls, billet-doux and Billy boys, but you see that nigger act is nearly through, and I've got to go and look after my girls." And with an "*Adio, Signor!*" and a wave of his hand, he withdrew.

I went up to the Alcazar on Monday night to see Bonfanti dance. I have a great respect for Bonfanti. She is a woman of character. When she first danced here the town was wild about her, and one young man, the son of rich and proud parents, offered her his hand in marriage. She hesitated for awhile, but he argued that because he was rich and his parents proud was no reason that he should be made unhappy by her refusal to marry him. She thought it over and came to the conclusion that he was right. So Mlle. Bonfanti became Mrs. Hoffman forthwith. The hue and cry raised by the Hoffmans was so violent that the young man could not stand it, and took his wife to Europe. His family allowed him little or no money, and he, having been very unpractically educated, could find no means of support. He was delicate and he fell ill and died. Then Bonfanti, or Mrs. Hoffman, came to New York to claim her rights as the wife of the son and heir of the Hoffmans, but they behaved in a way that wounded her pride — for ballet dancers as well as Hoffmans have pride — and she declined to accept any aid from them whatever. "As long as I have my feet to dance with," she said, "I can take care of myself, and I want none of their money." So she went back to the ballet, and has been dancing ever since. I couldn't help thinking as I looked at her the other night, that scions of proud New York families had often made worse matches. She has a good and still handsome face, and she dances as gracefully as ever. She is modest even when pointing at the footlights with one toe and at the chandelier with the other. Bonfanti is not one of the grinning dancers. Her face wears a rather sad expression, and she only smiles in acknowledgment of the applause of the audience. The competition with Lepri makes her do her best, and it is a regular dancing match every night.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS.

At seven o'clock one morning during the season of 1881–2 a tall, gawky, angular-looking young man in a suit of smutty and wrinkled gray, under a battered slouch hat with a bandit curl to its wide brim, stood at the door of one of the rooms of the Southern Hotel in St. Louis. He had a big bundle under his arm, and seemed tired, as indeed he was, for he had climbed four pairs of stairs and walked the lower hall-ways from one end to the other looking for the room which he had now found. He knocked kindly at first, but got no answer; knocked again with the same result, and again and again. The fifth time somebody said "Come in," and the young man twisted the knob and in a moment was standing at the bedside of the late Oscar G. Bernard, business manager of the Couldock-Ellsler Hazel Kirke Company. Bernard was still in bed and very sleepy.

"I've got a play I want to read to you," said the young man, shifting the bundle he had under his arm down into his hands, where Mr. Bernard could see it.

"A what?" the manager exclaimed, rising hurriedly upon his elbow and looking out through drowsy eyelids at a pile of foolscap manuscript big enough to fill a French Cyclopedia.

"A play," was the visitor's answer, in a quiet, unalarmed tone.

"Is that it?" Bernard asked, as he eyed the package of manuscript with astonishment.

"Yes, sir; there are only 439 pages."

"Oh, is that all? How many characters, scenes, and acts, and how long do you think it would take to play it?" asked the manager, trying to be as sarcastic as possible.

"There are forty-seven characters in the *dramatis personæ*," the playwright answered, nothing daunted, "nine acts, and it might take three hours or more to play it through."

"How many people get killed in it?"

"Only thirteen."

"Oh, pshaw!" said the manager; "go and kill off thirty more of 'em and then you will have a play worth talking about. You've got to kill somebody off every five minutes to make it stick. You needn't leave any more of them alive than just enough to group into a happy tableau at the end of the last act."

"I don't think I can do it," said the playwright.

"Oh, yes, you can," the manager insisted. "Just try it once; and here, take this pass and go and see 'Hazel Kirke' to-night. It plays only until eleven o'clock, and we don't think it quite long enough. If you could tone your play down so that we might use it for a kind of prologue or something of that sort it would be better."

The young man took the pass and departed. He was the queerest dramatist the country and century have produced, except possibly A. C. Gunter. He was fully six feet high, large and sharp-featured, with a light like lunacy dazzling in his black eyes and across his sallow face. His hands were large and his feet big, and as he ambled along the hotel hall he looked like an over-grown plowboy who had suddenly and mysteri-

ously turned book-peddler. Besides all this he seemed very hungry.

Early the next morning he was at Bernard's bed-side again. He had seen "Hazel Kirke," and thought over the manager's advice, but had not made the changes suggested because he was of the opinion now more than ever that the play would suit Mr. Bernard. Would the manager allow him to read it out to him? Its title was "Love and the Grave." The manager said he might leave the manuscript to be looked over during the day, but the dramatist said he preferred to read it so that none of the good points would be lost. Then the manager told him to call again. He called again early the next morning. The manager was still too busy and too sleepy to hear the play. The dramatist said he hated to part from his manuscript; he had been five years writing the play, but he liked Mr. Bernard and would leave it with him for twenty-four hours. The manager suggested that there was a possibility of the play being lost if the hotel were to take fire, but the young man answered that he had ascertained that the hotel was fire-proof, and he was willing to take the chances. He went away leaving the voluminous manuscript in the manager's possession. Of course Bernard didn't read it, but when the dramatist returned Friday morning he told him it was very good, and if the dramatist cared he could give him a letter to the manager of a Chinese theatre in San Francisco, who would be glad to purchase and produce such a play. The dramatist hoisted his manuscript under his arm, said he was sorry the Madison Square people couldn't use it, and went out hungrier-looking and more awkward than ever. Bernard hoped that it was the last of him.

But it was not. While Bernard was in John T. Raymond's room the following afternoon a knock was

neard at the door and in walked the dramatist. He did not recognize Mr. Bernard but told Raymond in piteous tones that the man he (Raymond) had recommended him to would not allow him to read the play, and didn't want it. A light flashed upon Bernard. Raymond laughed heartily. Bernard did not laugh. It was one of the comedian's practical jokes. He had sent the Illinois dramatist to the "Hazel Kirke" manager with positive instructions to insist upon reading the Chinese play to him. After the comedian had had his laugh, he pulled a nickel with a hole in it out of his pocket, and, turning to the playwright, said: —

"I'll tell you what I'll do. "I'll match you for the play. If I win I take the manuscript. If you win you take the nickel."

The dramatist was disgusted. He said all he wanted was money enough to get back to Springfield, Ill., where he edited a daily paper. If he had that he would be happy. Bernard and Raymond each gave him a $5 bill and sent him on his way rejoicing.

The trials and tribulations of the gawky young dramatist from the Sucker State is but a slightly exaggerated and caricaturish recital of the difficulties that have been lying in the path of American dramatists ever since we made anything like an attempt at a distinctively national dramatic literature. It has been all along, pretty much the same with the young American who wrote a play as it was with the seedy English authors of Sheridan's time. Fresh from his garret, and as hungry for fame and fortune as he was badly in need of a meal, the young man who had written a drama appeared in shabby-genteel attire at the door of the manager's office, and after introducing himself, handed over his manuscript, which was tossed into a drawer or box, while the poor author, trembling with

agitation, was told to return in a week or month. You may be sure the days and nights were nervously passed until the appointed time rolled around. Then, bright and early, still hopeful and still hungry, the author was at the manager's door.

"Well, sir, what do you wish?" was the abrupt and startling greeting accorded the author.

"I suppose you have read my play" —

"What play?"

The author names it and the manager sternly says: "No, sir, I haven't read it and know nothing about it. When did you leave it here?"

"A month ago, sir."

"Well I don't think it would do me any good to read it. I haven't either the time or the inclination. If you want it search in that box, and if you can't find your own you can take your choice of any of those in there."

This was, of course, a crusher. The young author moved away with a bleeding heart, and his armful of manuscript, and the stage to which his hopes and ambition had been attracted probably never offered him an opportunity to have his play damned on a first night. American dramatists are to-day pretty much in the same plight in regard to American managers and the American stage. Very few of our dramatic authors have received proper recognition, and few who have toiled at writing and dramatizing for years have much fame or money to show for their work. American managers have a rage for foreign works, and just now are pouring thousands of dollars into the pockets of English and French playwrights, whose work is by no means superior to that to be found in the home market. Some years ago that very successful play of "The Two Orphans" was purchased by an American

from its French author for a mere song. Now, Sardou gets $10,000 for a play like "Odette," which has so far, I believe, failed to bring that amount back to Mr. French, the purchaser. Samuel Colville paid Messrs. Pettitt & Merritt, of London, an enormous sum for the melodrama of "The World," which, however, made $75,000 for him. Messrs. Brooks & Dickson bought "Romany Rye," an untried play, from Sims, for America, paying him $10,000 cash; Colville paid a high price for "Taken from Life," and D'Oyley Carte planks down $12,000 to Mr. Sims for a drama, before a line of it is written, and sells the American right to Lester Wallack on the same terms.

All the American actors, actresses and managers nowadays want foreign plays and are willing to pay exorbitant prices for everything that is offered. On the other hand it is the exception when an American playwright does well, or indeed when his work is accepted at all. Some few late successes this side of the water have set all the ambitious young men of playwriting proclivities to work. One day it will be announced that John McCullough has bought a tragedy from a rising journalist, and next day all the journalists will be writing plays for him. So, too, with Raymond, and Mary Anderson, and a score of others. But, few writers among journalists succeed in dramatic work. Robert G. Morris, of the New York *Telegram*, is among the latest successes with his "Old Shipmates," and probably one of the greatest is Bartley Campbell, who sprang into fame in a night, after plodding patiently and poorly paid for years. Fred. Marsden, who writes Lotta's plays, is also among the fortunate, having, according to report, during his career made something like $70,000.

Bartley Campbell may be taken as an excellent ex-

ample of the manner in which the American dramatist works, and the almost despairing circumstances attending his long and weary chase of fortune. He is a man with a history. That history he made himself. From an office boy he has risen to a place of honor. Not that the position of office boy is dishonorable, but very few who begin life in that sphere ever attain as high a place as that now enjoyed by the greatest of our American dramatists. He was born at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, some thirty-seven years ago, and as soon as he graduated from the lap of infancy he entered a lawyer's office with the view of studying for the bar. But the reading of law he soon discovered was not at all to his liking, and he was declared an unpromising student, being too poetic and sentimental. His next move was to the office of the Pittsburg *Leader*, where he himself says he received the munificent salary of $5 a week for the hardest work he has ever done. Here is another illustration of the old saying, that when you have failed at everything else make up your mind to adopt the profession of actor or journalist. Young Campbell chose the latter. He preferred the stationary drudgery of a newspaper Bohemian's existence to the wandering chance-life of the equally hard worked, and, at that time, poorly paid actor. By diligence and close application to study he rose rapidly, and soon was entrusted with the responsible position of dramatic critic. He must have been a good one. It is said that he was a faithful critic; so faithful, indeed, as to warrant the chastisement of a bad actor, and endanger the publication of the paper with libel suits. He deserted the *Leader* and commenced publishing the *Mail*, and it is here, while editing this journal, that he first attempted play-writing. His early effort was the sensational drama called

"Through the Fire," brought out in 1871; then followed the comedy, "Peril," produced in 1872; the third was, "Fate," which was subsequently purchased by Miss Carlotta Leclerq, who played it with much success for several years; then followed, "Risks," now the property of John T. Raymond, and, in swift succession, the mill ground out "The Virginian," "On the Rhine," "Gran Uale," "The Big Bonanza," which, it will be remembered, was one of the successes of 1875. "A Heroine in Rags," "How Women Love" (later known as "The Heart of the Sierras," and still later as "The Vigilantes"), "Clio," "Fairfax," "My Partner," and lastly, "The Galley Slave." It was the success of "My Partner" that brought about the turning-point in Mr. Campbell's fortune. That he had suffered the severity of want, he confesses himself in a neat little Christmas story told by him to a newspaper correspondent, who met him at the door of Haverly's Theatre, New York, one night during the run of "The Galley Slave" in the metropolis. His tall figure, his slouch hat, rather dishevelled hair, twelve-cornered moustache, Prince Albert coat and disordered necktie looked just as they did when I first saw their owner some years ago, when his luck was away down. The statement of the night's receipts was brought him while we stood there, and his share was a few dollars more than six hundred.

"House not as good as last night," he said, "within a couple of dollars. Fact is, the business, although good, has not been better than it might be."

"Why, Bartley, you don't quarrel about a couple of dollars, now you are in the height of success? What is your income from plays, anyway?"

"I don't growl about a few dollars; but now is the time — see? When you can growl about them do it.

Well, I'm getting on an average $1,500 a week now."

"You'll soon be rich, Bartley."

"Well, I am so accustomed to bad luck, perhaps I may meet some — see?"

Bartley Campbell always says "see" in an interrogative way without much or any desire for an answer. In a rambling conversation about his varied career that followed, the drift of the talk got Christmas and poverty mixed, and Bartley told this story of his early struggles: "I had just gone to New Orleans with my wife, arriving there just when a newspaper had suspended, and twelve writers were, like myself, seeking journalistic work — only, unlike myself, they had acquaintances and friends; I neither; nor money, except five cents — see? The row was a hard one. After various 'shifts' — one of which was starting the *Southern Magazine*, which was brought out — we found ourselves, just before Christmas time, with nothing of importance except a grocery bill — see? I wrote a poem about Eddystone Light, and sent it to the *Nineteenth Century*, then published in Charleston, S. C., by Felix de Fontaine & Co. It was the small beginning of which the present *Nineteenth Century* is the great result — see?"

"Well, I marked on the MS. — price $15. Commercial poetry — see? We confidently expected that money before Christmas. Why, we took it as a matter of course that the money must come. If it didn't — well, that was a view of things that we couldn't take for a moment — see? Well, the day before Christmas came, but that money did not. I visited the post-office again and again that day, but no letter. The situation was gloomy then, and in the evening I said to my wife, 'I guess I'll have to go to the grocery, anyway.' 'I wouldn't go, Bart,' she

said; 'I am afraid he'll say something about the account.' 'I can't help it — I am going, anyhow,' I answered, and grabbed the basket and rushed out, for fear that my wife's fears would deter me from going at all — see? He didn't say anything about the account, and I ordered sparingly. When he got the things all in the basket, he slipped in with them a bottle of nice liquor, and he said: "Now, Mr. Campbell, this is Christmas Eve.' I went home, and I drank some of the liquor, and when we went to bed things looked a little brighter. I got up in the morning, and they were gloomy again — see? I started down to the post-office, my wife saying it was a fruitless errand, and got there just before the Christmas rule of closing at 10 A. M. shut down the delivery window. The clerk ran through every letter, and when he had got to the last one, and as I half turned to leave, he threw me down a letter which bore the date mark 'Charleston.' I opened it, and there was a check for $15. My legs couldn't carry me home fast enough. I got there, and my wife met me, her face all aglow. 'Well, Bart,' she said. 'Well,' I said, and I felt that she had heard the news — that some one had told her my check had come, for to me it was the biggest piece of news ever was, and that it was common talk was perfectly natural. 'Bartley, I have got $10,' she cried. 'And I have got $15,' I yelled; and she, not noticing it, went on, 'I sold the war book about women, that nobody would buy before, to some people who wanted it. Now, don't be extravagant, Bartley, please. We had a bottle of champagne that day, and presently I got the position of official reporter of the Legislature at $16 a week; but Christmas time never comes that I do not wonder if I

will have as merry and happy a day as the one we celebrated in New Orleans just after the war."

In view of what has been said about the almost merciless treatment the American dramatist, as a general rule, receives from the American theatrical manager, it may be well to add here the statement made lately by Mr. William Seymour, stage manager of the Madison Square Theatre, New York. He exhibited to a visitor a drawerful of manuscripts, and said, although he had read and rejected one hundred and fifty plays within nine months, he still had almost as many more left. As a usual thing the plays offered were, he claimed, weak imitations of "Hazel Kirke" and kindred plays, or wretched translations from the German or French. One or two were very original attempts. Picking up a heavy manuscript bound with blue ribbon, and looking very like a young girl's graduating essay or poem, Mr. Seymour said: Here is a play in seven acts, which opens in America at some large seaport town, the author isn't particular where, and an embarkation scene ends the first act. In the second the ship has made its way in toward the Arctic regions and is wrecked by an iceberg. The hero bravely cuts down a spar, lashes himself to it and jumps overboard. In the third act he is discovered upon an iceberg beyond the Arctic circle, starving and almost dead, while in the distance a battle is in progress between a pirate ship and Chinese junk. The Chinamen are destroyed, and in the fourth act the hero is rescued from the iceberg. A marine encounter between Chinamen and pirates in the Arctic Ocean is bad enough, but even this is outdone in the fifth act, where the hero is discovered upon a tropical island with his feet frostbitten. The remaining two acts are used to get him back to America, which is done in full

accordance with the rest of the play. I have many others just as bad. Here is one with fifty-two speaking characters, and here is another in four acts, which would require but twenty-nine minutes to play the whole thing through. But strange and curious as the plays are, I think that the letters I receive from the authors are still greater curiosities. Occasionally some of them are modest enough to admit the possibility of failure, but as a general thing they do not hesitate to dwell upon the beauties of their productions and the certainties of success. Moreover, they are always ready to make terms and some of their offers are very amusing. Here is one that will serve as a sample: —

"DEAR SIR: The undersigned is the Author of a new three act Drama it is romantic, Dramatic and Scenic, and has a good plot. The Story is interesting. The dialogue is bright and Witty, the unities of the plot are preserved, and the Situations Are Picturesque and effective. I have had it nicely copied.

"And wish to sell it to you if you wish to become the Proprietor of my play.

"Terms, I will sell you My copyright and Manuscript, And Give you 100 Printed copies, for the use of actors, for $1000 dols.

"The name of My Play is

"Charles Ryan.

"The scenes are in Italy, Time 1868.

"Yours, Very Respectfully, etc., etc., etc.,

"——— ——— ———

"Author.

"P. S. — I inclose my card, I don't be at Home every day, but am at home nearly every evening bet. 8 and 10 o'clock.

"(I did not have my Play Printed yet.)"

CHAPTER XIX.

"MASHERS" AND "MASHING."

The masher is a remarkable creature. He hovers everywhere, from the market-place to the meeting-house and from the promenade to the theatre. He is many-phased and many-faced, and may come from the slums or be the son of a first-class preacher of the Gospel. The class has been termed gunaikophagists by some fellow reckless alike of the feelings of philologists and of the jaws of the rising generation, who says it means woman-eaters, but may be less polysyllabically styled corner loafers and miserable scoundrels, who live on the curbs and in some instances hug the wall — have a pardonable affection, considering that they part their hair in the middle, for malacca, bamboo, and rubber sticks — and last, but not least, some indulge a precocious vanity by planting eye-glasses across their noses. These are, par excellence, the cane-and-eye-

A BOWERY "MASHER."

glass friends, and they remind one of nothing else in the world than a sickly looking cross between a saw-buck and a half-resuscitated dried herring. The masher's sole ambition, is to win hearts, which he hopes to do by staring ladies out of countenance, and which he often does in a most flagrant and audacious manner. There are young and old of this class, and they are of all grades, from the young man who negotiates with you over a counter for a paper of pins or a dozen shoe-strings, up to his employer, and from that up the monetary scale to the man who wholesales the employer the pins which the "mashing" salesman disposes of a nickle's worth at a time. Sandwiched between these at proper, or rather improper, intervals are the "What d'ye soy?" crowd, the "toughs" wearing high felt hats turned up with care before and behind, and, without exception, sporting the inevitable tight jeans breeches. Their influence extends only to a certain class — to the concert and variety dives — and it is unfortunate to the poor girls, outside of this class, who fall a prey to these ruthless "mashers."

The theatre appears to possess loadstone qualities for the masher; it is as attractive to them as the flame of the candle is for the moth or the flower for the bee. I have already in a preceding chapter said a great deal about the "mashing" that is done in the audience by both male and female exponents of the disreputable art. I shall now confine myself to the "mashers" in the profession and those who try to "mash" the profession. Some young gentlemen with more money than brains imagine that actresses have nothing else to do but receive attentions from the opposite sex, and that there is no "wall of China" around the virtue of any woman on the stage. They therefore not only make bold to talk freely about actresses, but are valiant

enough to try to ensnare them by letters abounding in

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACBETH: — "Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers; the sleeping, and the dead
Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil."
Macbeth, Act II., Scene 2.

hyperbole and odorescent of cologne-besprent idiocy.

The variety actress is the ideal prize of this class, and they are in their greatest glory when within the frolicsome precincts of the wine-room. I have seen many a young man whose hair was parted in the middle crow lustily over the successful capture of a ballet girl, when he himself had been the capture. These girls know what their charms are worth and hold them at that price, when they see a victim well dressed and with an apparently healthy pocket-book. They, in expressive but slangy language, lay for him. They are not foolish enough to invite him to their side; they allow him to make an apparent conquest which guarantees them all the greater gain. The young gentleman of whom I speak was lured in this way; and as she sat with well-rounded limbs pulsating through silken tights and gracefully thrown upon an opposite chair, and he leant over her whispering soft words and looking fondly upon her painted face, while they clinked champagne glasses, she with downcast eyes was playing innocence, but all the while congratulating herself upon the arch manner in which she had won him.

Just as bad as the female "masher" on the stage is the female "masher" who has no claims on the profession. The latter has studied her art perfectly, that it may assist her in throwing her net about the unsophisticated. Females of this class in the East make it their business to frequent the matinees, where with the assistance of the ushers, whom they remunerate handsomely for their co-operation, they gather a granger in, and within twelve hours or so send him home whining at his idiocy in not having resisted the temptation that left him penniless. The gay sirens who are in this business generally go in pairs. The usher locates them next to their victim, and once there they've got him for all the cash he took out of the

(280) WORKING A "GREENY" AT A MATINEE.

family sock before leaving Jerusha and his eight little ones.

The blonde beauties of the leg drama, or the fair burlesquers, as some people call them, are considered legitimate prey by the "mashing" fraternity. Indeed it is often a case of diamond cut diamond, for the burlesquers are themselves notoriously liberal in making acquaintances, and the majority of them will accept a midnight drive or a morning supper as readily as they do the friendship of the gentleman who tenders them. The bewildering array of limbs and shapely forms, the golden hair and apparently fresh and handsome faces set the young swells wild, and the rush for orchestra chairs down front where a quiet flirtation can be carried on shows the great extent of rivalry that exists among their number. Any number of scented notes on rose-tinted paper find their way through the stage-door into the hands of the giddy throng behind the scenes, and as they glance through it they laugh at the foolishness of the writer but agree to "work him" to the full extent of his wealth. The comedian who knows that the girls have got "another sucker on a string" comes up and wants to see the last "letter from home." He gives the girls a funny bit of advice about retaining their innocence if they would be happy, but adds that if there is anything in the fellow, to "catch on" at once — which of course the girls have already made up their minds to do.

A veteran in the business says: "Actresses have the most marked talents for wheedling the gilded youth out of money. Such 'guys' and 'gillies' fancy that if they are known as the patrons and friends of stage stars all the world is staring at them and envying their conquests. Poor idiots, their entire conquest consists in that they make over their own common

FROM ONE OF THE "MASHED."

sense! The silly ninny rejoicing in the showy and artful woman's favors counts himself a privileged mortal, but his chief privilege in regard to a cunning, schem-

ing stage siren is the privilege of paying her bills. Of the men with money she makes fools. When she scents a full pocket-book she runs it low. Her affection, so far as she has any to bestow, is probably lavished on a big animal of a loafer from whom she gets no money, and who, perhaps, beats her and makes her support him. It is a paradox of feminine nature that the women who are unscrupulous and heartless in wheedling men of money seem so lavishly free in bestowing favors and bounty on loaferish lovers, from whom they can make nothing. An actress is psychically a study, always curious and unaccountable, however talented.'

Some comic opera choruses, particularly those of the limb-exhibiting kind, have attained to almost equal notoriety with the burlesquers in the "mashing" line. The fact of the matter is that in the branches of the profession where women are employed, not for their artistic qualities, but on account of the plumpness of their limbs and the agreeableness of their entire figure to the male eye, there is so much laxness and so much that is altogether bad, that the ladies of the higher walks of the profession do not always escape, and the "masher," who is always going around seeking what fair females he may devour, frequently dares to approach some of the best women in the profession. Here is a specimen of the work of one of this class; it is a letter received by one of the best and handsomest little ladies the stage ever saw, and whose retirement from the boards was really a great loss to the dramatic art: —

EXCHANGE HOTEL,
MONTGOMERY, ALA., ——, 187–.

I know I am violating the cold conventionalities of life by addressing you, but if it angers you, the friendly fire which blazes before you will prove a suitable altar

upon which you can sacrifice my homage. I never saw you before to-night, but to see you is to be dazed — glamoured with a glare. May I dare to hope that I shall ever stand abashed in your presence, waiting your sweet will to raise my eyes to your dear face in adoration? Tell me that I may follow you through all the world upon my bended knees, to find at last your favor, that I may live in hope upon the memory of your smile, and know that at the last you will be content to let me kneel at your feet and find reward in that alone. Oh, dear heart, let me dream of you until you awaken. Yours, devoted,

F. H. M.

Can anybody imagine a more glowing and positive piece of idiocy? This would-be "masher" should be taken out in the woods and brained with a five-syllable adjective that he would not be able to identify in the next world. Many actresses refuse to receive letters that are sent to them from strange admirers. Mary Anderson never sees such a letter, although bushels of them are sent to her. And she is only one of hundreds who adopt the policy of rejecting strange letters at sight. Frequently married ladies in the profession are made targets of by the letter-writing brigade of mashers, and more than one head has been artistically mutilated as a return for the "masher's" impertinent pains.

A New York correspondent writes as follows about a pretty little actress and singer, who while fulfilling an engagement at the Bijou Opera House, New York, last summer, broke the hearts of all the "swells" and "bloods" of the metropolis, and had the house filled nightly with rival admirers, among whom was the melancholy son of a Washington, D. C., judge: "Miss Lillian Russell is a beauty without a shadow

of doubt. She is about twenty-six, I believe. It is by no means generally known that she is married, and that her husband is an honest, hard-working, and thorough orchestra leader, to whom she owes her present proficiency in vocal culture. He was very fond of her, and always believed in her success. No man could have worked more faithfully. Finally he found an opening for her on the variety stage as a serio-comic — as the phrase goes — singer. She attracted attention at once, and he labored vigilantly until he found a legitimate opening in English comic opera. I believe it was 'The Snake Charmer.' She was very glad to get out of the variety rut so soon, and expressed delight at the admiration she excited. Then came the club-men with their swell slang, gaudy carts and flowing money. Now she is suing her husband for divorce. Such is life. The husband, I hear, harassed by care, and perhaps something else, had become so nervous or inattentive that he lost his position in the orchestra, and so the shades of prosperity and adversity are more clearly defined than ever. Miss Russell seems to have been under the especial care of a theatrical goddess of sensationalism. Everything has conspired to make her name familiar. Her escapade with one of the young men was inevitable. The only question was which one she would select. It happened to be Howard Osborne, the son of the wealthy banker. One night when it was time for the curtain to rise, and the audience was getting into a white heat, the manager came forward displaying a decided desire to swear like a pirate, and announced that Miss Russell had suddenly and unwarrantedly run away. The next morning Mr. Osborne, Sr., wondered where in thunder his son was. He received a letter later, and immediately fell into a howling rage. Shortly after-

wards Mr. Howard Osborne was heard of in Chicago, whence it was blandly stated Miss R. had gone to visit an aunt. The young man was sent spinning over the sea to Europe, and the steamer had just arrived when his fond parent had the exquisite pleasure of reading at breakfast a cable in the morning papers relating a little excursion of a certain Mr. Howard Osborne, Esq., said to be of New York, with Miss Alice Burville, the burlesque actress, at the Ascot races. Heigho! 'Which the ways of the world is peculiar, Mrs. 'Arris, sez I.'"

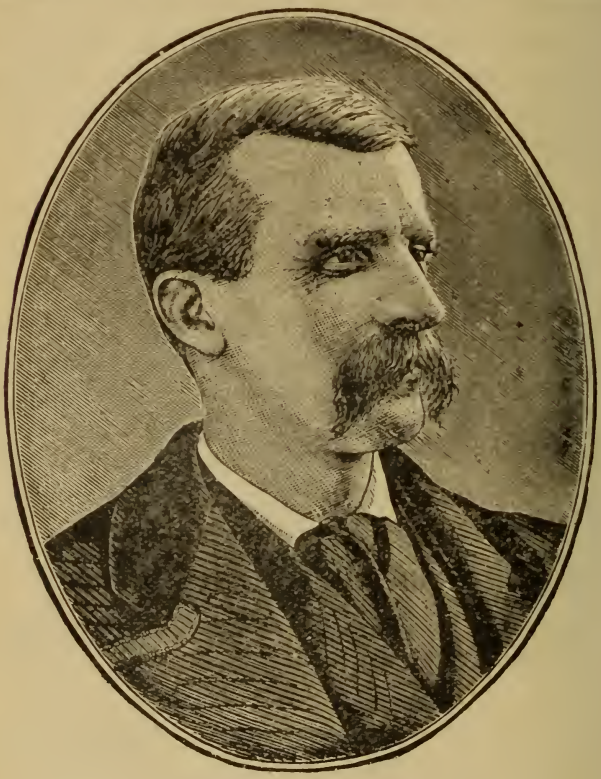
A Californian, who reached the Pacific slope in '49 as a peddler, but is now a bachelor millionaire, has been sued for breach of promise by the walking lady of a San Francisco theatre, who seems to have effectually succeeded in "mashing" the old man. The defendant it is said first saw the plaintiff at a performance at the theatre where she was engaged. He became impressed with her charms and sought an introduction. He gained it and became an assiduous attendant upon her. Their intimacy, the lady alleges, ended in a promise of marriage, and she claims to possess letters in which she is addressed by those endearing epithets good husbands apply to the spouses they love. However that may be, the defendant showered bounties on her, both in jewels and money, for upwards of a year. Then business called him to his mines in Amador County. He was to be away some weeks, but returned sooner than he had anticipated. He drove directly to the theatre where the plaintiff was performing at the time of his arrival in San Francisco, and got there just in time to see her walk away with another man. That other man, moreover, was an actor with whom rumor had associated her name more than once, though

she had succeeding in arguing suspicion in the matter away from the mind of her senile lover. This time, however, argument failed to do the work required of it. Detectives employed by the defendant resulted in the discovery that his gifts and favors had only served to benefit a younger and more fascinating man, and he literally as well as metaphorically shook the dust of his false one's door-mat off his feet forever. Then followed the suit, which he calls blackmail, and she, a demand for justice.

ADELINA PATTI'S "MASH."

Adelina Patti is credited with a strange fascination, while in New York, the diva having succumbed to the blandishments of a midget. The story is that she saw a picture of the midget Dudley Foster on exhibition at Bunnell's museum, and driving down Broadway, stopped at Bunnell's establishment and asked George Starr, the wily and polite manager, for the loan of the diminutive specimen of humanity. Starr agreed and the midget was handed into her carriage. "Here is a

pretty toy," gushed the prima donna, covering the little creature with kisses. She took him to her hotel and passed an entire afternoon singing to him and chatting. How Nicolini took to the new crank of his singing bird is not stated. Mr. Foster plumes himself



J. H. HAVERLY.

considerably on the fact that he has done what princes have tried in vain — cut out Nicolini — and he boasts, too, that the prima donna before she would let him go made him promise to call on her the following week.

Actors have their "mashes" too, the same as actresses, and the gentlemen who own flexible voices, and

flourish them through all the glorious variations of operatic music, seem to be most successful in captivating the fair and susceptible sex. "It is hard to understand why it is," says a Chicago newspaper, "but somehow, while girls recognize the powder and paint, the blonde wigs and penciled brows of a prima donna as so much make-up, they refuse to analyze the charms of a tenor, and his grease, paint, luxuriant locks, and graceful mustache are admired as his very own. A case in point was that of a young lady whose father is well known on the Chicago Stock Exchange. She was violently smitten with Campanini, and used to send him no end of beautifully written missives, and every night a bouquet of red roses. The letters especially attracted the attention of the tenor because they were written in smoothly flowing Italian, and evidently by some one who was more romantic than fast or wild. There was little trouble in finding out the fair correspondent, and Mme. Campanini, who has a good and lovely soul, sent a note to the young lady and asked her to call. It is needless to say the latter's delightful delusions were quickly dispelled before the domestic life of the silver-toned tenor and the kindly advice of his good wife.

The extent to which these serio-comic love affairs are carried on is enormous, and sometimes the parties show an amusing ingenuity in their correspondence. Del Puente once went nearly wild with ungratified curiosity through the pranks of a mischievous school girl, who was perpetually sending him love letters, in which she declared she never missed a single night when he sung, and that when he left New York on his tour with Her Majesty's Company she should follow him and be present at every performance. Sure enough, in every city where he sang he received a

pretty note of congratulation, with the usual information that the writer — dressed, as usual, in black — was present. Of course, there were always a number of young and pretty women in this sombre hue, but which was his correspondent Del Puente never could decide. The letters were always post-marked with the name of the city he happened to be in, and finally he became really nervous with the idea of an unknown woman following him in this shadowy fashion. His curiosity was not destined to be satisfied until long afterward, when he found that the fair unknown, cleverly following the published route, would send a stamped but undirected letter to the postmaster of the city he happened to be in, with a request that he would ascertain the singer's address and forward it. As long as the letter was stamped this was sure to be done, and the tenor never failed to receive the missive.

A case of basso-infatuation was that of a daughter of an ex-Senator, still prominent in Washington circles, who used to spend all her pin-money in buying presents and baskets of flowers, which she sent to Conley. In some mysterious way her father received a hint of it, and the young lady was sent to the Georgetown convent, where she was educated for a couple of years by way of punishment. She probably did not know that Conley was married. Poor fellow, he was drowned last summer.

Castle, though neither so young nor so charming as he once was, still receives loads of gushing epistles, which Mrs. Castle demurely twists into cigar lighters; and Brignoli says, "I haf teached misself ze Inglis language with these liddle letters."

In Chicago there resides a wealthy and charming young married lady who entertains handsomely, and is well known in society, but who distracts her elderly

husband by a mania for making the acquaintance of every new male singer of note, and entertaining him with the greatest elegance and expense. Of course a majority of these affairs are entered into either in the spirit of romance or mischief, but in either case it is apt to result disastrously, and the world has a cruelly uncomfortably way of stamping them with another and harsher name.

Having noticed that there was a stain on the lips of the portrait of Campanini the tenor, hanging in the lobby of the Academy of Music, New York, a visitor called an attendant's attention to it and advised him to wipe it off. "Why, bless you," said the attendant, "we do so every day. That's where the girls kiss it. That picture makes as many mashes as Campy himself, and if he was kissed half as often his lips would be quite worn away. Lord what fools women are, to be sure!" The visitor waited long enough to see a well-dressed and handsome young lady approach and kiss the picture. At least he says he saw it.

There is also a humorous side to this "mashing" business. Men and boys who run after actresses generally get themselves into trouble, particularly is this the case with old men — men old enough to be thinking of the designs for their tombstones instead of running around variety theatres hugging girls and lavishing champagne and beer upon them. An old sinner of this stamp got into trouble in a New York theatre one day. He made himself conspicuous and obnoxious at a rehearsal by stumbling over the stage and getting in everybody's way. The supes cursed him and the stage carpenter called down anathemas on his aged head, but the old fellow was indifferent, for he was basking in the smiles of a well-known soubrette and was happy. Finally he posed in the centre of the stage

just as an "interior" was to be set. The scene shifters saw he was in a good position to be squeezed, and they quietly shoved the scenes together. The lover, intent

A MONKEY SPOILING A "MASH."

on his inamorata, discovered his predicament only when caught, but the scene shifters were deaf to his cries, and he was held a prisoner. He was only released on

swearing never again to poke his nose inside the stage-door, and furnishing enough to treat the boys. When at last he was free, he made hasty tracks for the exit, and was heard to mutter as he went out, he'd be d—d if he wanted to be squeezed again, even by his charming soubrette.

The bald-headed men, though, get it worse than anybody else, and particularly so when their bald heads are hidden under wigs. A monkey had a part to play in a piece running at one of the metropolitan variety theatres. There was a pretty burlesque actress playing there at the same time and she had a host of admirers with more money than brains. Among the number was an addle-pated old rascal, who preferred the society of the "artiste" to that of his aged wife, who had lost the charms which enraptured his fancy when he led her years ago as a blushing bride to the altar. One evening the fellow bribed the door-keeper at the stage entrance to admit him to that realm of dirt, paint, and faded tinsel "behind the scenes," and he stationed himself in the wings in order to welcome his charmer when she retired amid the plaudits of the audience. But alas, the "best laid plans of mice and men gang aft aglee." The monkey espied him, and at once fell in love with the glossy wig which covered the bald head. Swinging itself down from the flies the monkey made a swoop with its long arm and the masher was scalped. He cried lustily, but the monkey made off with its trophy and the masher sloped with a handkerchief tied over his head.

Almost similar was the fate of a bewigged Parisian who was loafing and "mashing" behind the scenes of the Grand Opera. A dancer stood in the wings listening to the prattle of a silly old man. He was protesting heartily his love for the young lady, and was on

the point of kissing her hand, when, as he stooped down, she snatched his wig from his head. At that moment she had to appear on the stage, and did so amid laughter and applause; for she carried with her the old fellow's scalp as if by way of trophy. The applause was less loud, but much more humorous on the stage; for the gay old lover and his bald head had to stand a deal of quizzing from those who, like himself, were in the wings waiting for their "little dears" to return.

Since the establishment of garden theatres for the summer months, in nearly all the large cities of the Union, the "masher" finds ample field for the kind of sport he indulges in. A girl in red tights created a great commotion among the swell mashers who frequented Uhrig's Cave, St. Louis, during the summer of 1881, and in that connection there could have been revelations that would carry grief into a few homes and bring disgrace upon not young and irresponsible men, but upon prominent citizens who were foolish enough to be fascinated by the crimson symmetricals. The fraternity have a peculiar way of working a summer garden. The phalanx of mashers begin operations early in the evening. They get to the garden before the lamps are lit, and dust some of the chairs with their coat-tails and pantaloons. They watch the singers as they enter and endeavor to catch some suggestion from them that a mash has been effected. Now and then a soft, gazelle-like glance or a sweet, girlish simper, like the smile on a sick monkey's under lip, gives a token of slight recognition, and then the masher's heart and eye are full of gladness. When the curtain is rung up and the glare turned on, the "mashers" move in a body towards the front of the stage and dust some more of the chairs. Then they fix their eyes like so many

lances upon the girls and again attempt to impale hearts. After the performance they move in a double line to the side aisle of the garden, and, opening ranks, wait for the actresses to come out. When the actresses do come out they are obliged to run a gauntlet that would put any but a cast-iron woman with a heavy veil on to the reddest blush. Sometimes a "masher" accomplishes his aim in life and captures a girl, but it is seldom. The professional poser has too wide a reputation and his figure is as clear a "give-away" as the cigar-sign Indian's, so that a reputable young lady who cares anything about continuing to be respected and esteemed by her friends is obdurate to the glances, the moustache, the smiles, the white hat, light pantaloons, bamboo canes, and cheap button-hole bouquets —

AMBLELEG.
See p. 296.

> The Saturday matinee young man,
> The five-cent-cigar young man,
> The sweetly susceptible, somewhat disrep'table,
> Gaze-and-admire-me young man.

And so it goes on every night. Music and "mashing" so charmingly dovetail themselves to the entertainment that there is as much amusement in looking up one as in listening to the other.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MAIDEN AND THE TENOR.

Mr. Troubadour Ambleleg was a tenor. He waved his light voice for a light salary in the chorus of an unexpensive opera company that made the summer months of 1881 and the opera air of the West End of St. Louis melodious to a sometimes quite harassing degree. His soul was as full of art as his throat was of music. He doted upon the beautiful wherever he came in contact with it, and frequently, when he heard of beauty lying around in languid looseness in any direction, he went out of his way to find it. It was in this manner he became acquainted with Miss Silica Justaytine. She was the belle of an upperly upper circle, a glowing, brown-eyed maiden, with sun-kissed hair, and the sweetest smiles that ever played in Polar-light style over the ruffs and ruchings of an expensive toilet. Indeed, an aurora borealis of glinting good nature shone upon the horizon of her lips, and a single glance of her eye was worth more to a man in love than the advent of a sprinkling cart to a traveller perishing of thirst on a dry and burning desert. When Mr. Ambleleg saw Miss Justaytine, that pink of beauty and perfection of belleship, gracing a front bench, where the susceptible tenor was nightly airing his voice at a salary of ten dollars a week, their eyes met and their loves at once intertwined. Like Tecetl, the daughter of Montezuma, who found in the yellow-haired warrior, Alvarado, the lover she had dreamt of

long before the prow of the "fair god's" vessel touched the shores of Mexico, the super-æsthetical maiden of my story saw in the chorus singer the affinity for which she had long looked and sighed. Mr. Ambleleg, too, at once became aware that in Miss Justaytine he had met his fate. They smiled, and sighed, and ogled, and encouraged each other across the foot-lights. The chorus singer forgot all the other maiden beauty that flourished under the foliage, and there were crushed and trampled hearts lying in the chasm across which Ambleleg and Miss Justaytine exchanged their affections. But Ambleleg did not mind it. He had learned that Miss Justaytine was the queen of her circle, and he determined to share her crown with her. Now, Ambleleg was not wealthy; neither was he rich in prepossessing features. His teeth were freckled, his mouth was big, his forehead small, his eyes expressionless, his hair of a buttery yellow, his moustache vapid, his shirt calico, and usually required to do long service without washing, while his general appearance was not extravagantly pleasant, and certainly not over-abundant in that grace and ease for which pretty girls have, at all times, a fondness. Therefore, it was surprising that Miss Silica Justaytine fell in love with the chorus-singing tenor. But she did so, and, it seems, fell so deeply into admiration of himself and his voice, that she could not have done better had she made the start, in falling, from the top of a seven-story house. When love is once kindled in the glow of a pair of admiring eyes, look out for a conflagration in the neighborhood of the pericardium. Night after night, as the moon washed the tree tops with waves of silver, and the leaves rustled their whispers to each other, Miss Silica Justaytine sat in the front row, either joining with the chorus of æsthetic

maidens in "Patience" in singing to her own ideal *Bunthorne*, —

> Turn, oh turn in this direction,
> Shed, oh shed a gentle smile;
> With a glance of sad perfection
> My poor fainting heart beguile!
> On such eyes as maidens cherish
> Let thy fond adorer gaze,
> Or incontinently perish
> In their all-consuming rays.

Or following *Bettina* through the mazes of the "Mascotte" gobble song, while she had a *Pippo* of her own in mind all the time. Ambleleg noticed this growing affection, and sang all the louder, and all the wilder, to the great endangerment of the performances. At last Miss Silica Justaytine left him a token of her love — a soft, white rose, which she kissed and placed in her chair as she departed one evening. Ambleleg cleared the stage at a bound, secured the creamy flower, pressed it to his lips and over his calico shirt bosom, after which he carefully stowed it away in a pocket-book with his wash and board-bills. The following day Miss Silica Justaytine was toying with a $10,000 necklace in the bay window of her palatial residence on Pinafore Avenue, when the postman handed her a letter in a yellow envelope. It was from Ambleleg. She blushed as she looked at it, then opened and read it, smiled and floated gracefully up to an escritoire, where she indited a charming little note on pink monogram paper with heavy gold edges, and placed it in one of the nattiest and most scrumptious envelopes you ever saw. Ambleleg read that note that very night to a group of wide-eyed and open-mouthed chorus singers. It invited him to call on Miss Justaytine the next day. The call was made. Miss Silica Justaytine received Ambleleg at the front door, and led him to the magnificent parlor as graciously as if he were a prince.

"My *Pippo!*" she cried, as she flung her arms around his neck, and almost knocked over the piano stool.

"My *Bettina!*" sighed the tenor, as he pressed her to his glowing bosom.

After the first agony of meeting they sat down and told the stories of their love. Cruel fate had dealt harshly with both. One was already engaged to be married; the other would not begin to have a ghost of a show at monogamy if wives were to be had at ten cents a dozen. Miss Justaytine was betrothed to Mr. Praymore, a young man who had hopes of coming into a fortune some day or other, providing he survived the parent who accumulated it. Mr. Ambleleg was impecunious; still she said she could scrape up enough to buy him a suit of clothes and a box of tooth-powder, and then they might fly together as far as East St. Louis anyhow. Miss Justaytine was to become a wandering minstrel's bride. She took the $5,000 diamond engagement ring Mr. Praymore had given her, from her finger, and put on a $2 imitation amethyst that the chorus singer gave her. What simple, pure, and unselfish love.

But the course of true love is as rough as the rocky roads in Dublin. Not content with wandering under his inamorata's window every night wasting his breath in whistling Sullivan's music to pieces, while *Bettina* opened the shutters of the third-story window and softly sang,—

For I mi-hy turkey's love,

to which *Pippo* melodiously responded,—

And I my shee-eep love.

After which there was a mixture of "gobble, gobble, gobble," and "ba-a-a-ahs." Not content with this innocent and artistic way of amusing himself while he

kept people awake for blocks around, Ambleleg very indiscreetly boasted of his success, and exhibited Miss Silica Justaytine's notes and photographs to indiscriminate crowds. One day he met Mr. Praymore and a prize-fighting brother of Miss Justaytine in the street. This brother had done yoeman's service in the 24-foot ring, and required but slight provocation to disturb the claret in a nose so inviting as that which decorated the middle of Mr. Ambleleg's face. By the free use of whiskey punches these young men finally inveigled Ambleleg into a deep and dark cellar where they proceeded to touch him up with fists and feet that he might not be able to identify himself again. After materially spoiling his appearance, they made themselves presents of the photographs and letters which they found in his possession, gave him a few parting touches, and then went away to prepare an official statement of their side of the case. Ambleleg now had no more use for the Justaytine mansion, or the Justaytine beauty, so he made up his mind to heal his heart and his bruises with a $10,000 balm. For this purpose he went into court. Miss Silica had winged herself away to the Rosebud Sulphur Springs, and was not aware of the fame herself and her chorus singer were achieving at home. Ambleleg hired him two lawyers to plead his cause, and then there was a great uproar all over the country. The papers busied themselves about the matter very much, and impudently published all the details that they could get hold of. Quite natural it was that when Miss Silica Justaytine arrived at the Rosebud Sulphur Springs, the fashionable and celebrated beauties there should be so jealous of her triumph over a chorus singer, that they were sparing of their attentions and cutting in their remarks. Some of the same envious ones had had

food for gossip a season or two before over Miss Silica Justaytine's capture of a $15,000,000 ex-Presidental candidate. That a woman should range all the way from a Presidential candidate to a chorus singer, was unusual and interesting. So unpleasant did the gossiping souls at Rosebud Sulphur Springs make it for Miss Silica Justaytine, that she hastened back to the more congenial atmosphere of her home on Pinafore Avenue. In the meantime, her prize-fighting brother and Mr. Praymore had, with the same courage that impelled them to decoy Mr. Ambleleg into a cellar, and beat him, and draw a Gatling gun on him, fallen down on their knees before Miss Silica Justaytine and asked her to plead their cause. She consented, and by a swift-footed courier sent Ambleleg a message accompanied by the talismanic words, "*Pippo*" and "Amethyst." He stopped smoking a five-cent cigar and rushed out to the Justaytine mansion like a fire-engine pursued by an insurance man. His lawyer seized his coat-tail and followed, the two arriving there out of breath, the one bent on money, the other called by the sweet voice of love.

"Oh, *Pippo!*"

"Oh, *Bettina!*"

This was the salutation that fell from the two lovers as their eyes melted into each other.

"*Pippo*, you have sued my prize-fighting brother and my ostensible lover for $10,000. They are short of cash just now and cannot conveniently pay. Please cut down the amount just a little bit, dear *Pippo*. For the sake of this amethyst (shows him the ring) I beg of you cut it down," said she.

"I'll cut it down, *Bettina*," he said, "but I do it only for your sweet dear sake."

"How much?" she asked.

"All I want," he answered, "is enough to buy a silver watch, a new suit of clothes, pay my board and wash bill, get me three cigars for ten cents, and take me home to my mother. I think I can get along with $500."

"Is that all?" the charming and delighted creature inquired.

"Not quite all," put in Ambleleg; "the two lawyers I have hired cannot be assuaged with less than $500. We three — that is, the two lawyers and myself — want $500 apiece. Thus you see I cut the $10,000 down $8,500," and he jammed his thumbs into the arm-holes of his vest and assumed the attitude of a man who could lose that amount in a game of poker every day in the week and never feel the loss.

"Oh, *Pippo*, you are so good to reduce so liberally," said Miss Justaytine, and she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him in a wild and irresponsible way.

Thus the interview ended, and as Ambleleg ambled down the front steps Miss Silica Justaytine sat down at her piano, ecstatically thrummed it and enthusiastically sang: —

A feather-headed young man,
A goosey-goosey young man,
An utterly looney, much too-sooney,
Swallow-the-bait young man.

The lawyers subsequently fixed the matter up among themselves, and Ambleleg, after getting a few dollars and a new pair of heavy-soled shoes, struck out nobly for the home of his mother. When last heard from he still had a good chorus voice and was helping to fill in the intervals of comic opera with his low and gentle howl.

* * * * * *

CHAPTER XXI.

FISHING FOR FREE PUFFS.

The merchant who has anything to dispose of advertises it, and the most successful men in any line of business are those who are most liberal in the use of printers' ink. The theatrical fraternity thoroughly understand this, and their first and foremost idea in everything they do is to get themselves before the public, and, if possible, keep themselves there. Their appreciation of the value of a puff or notice is beautifully set forth in the following funny paragraph which I found floating around in the newspapers : —

"A Leadville paper stated that a well-known actress who visited that city went to a saloon after a performance, played poker, got drunk, licked the bartender, and cleaned out the crowd. Of course she was very indignant and was going to cowhide the editor, when the amazed journalist explained to her that it was a first-class puff that would get her an opening in society in Leadville. And then she thanked him and gave him a dozen passes."

Some actors, and some actresses, too, do not care a cent what the means employed are or what the printed matter is, so the names are their own and once more they are before the people. The great majority, however, while anxious to appear in print as often and in as many columns as a paper can spare without throwing out paying advertisements, are very scrupulous about the character of the statements credited to

(304) SERVING A WRIT ON FANNY DAVENPORT.

them or actions spoken of, while all affect to be utterly independent of the press and to have no regard whatever for the good it can do them, or the harm either. If they meant what they said they might be set down as foolish; but they do not mean anything of the kind, and the fact that day after day the most outrageous stories about professional people go uncontroverted, is an indication that not only are they willing to have such things published, but may have instigated them themselves.

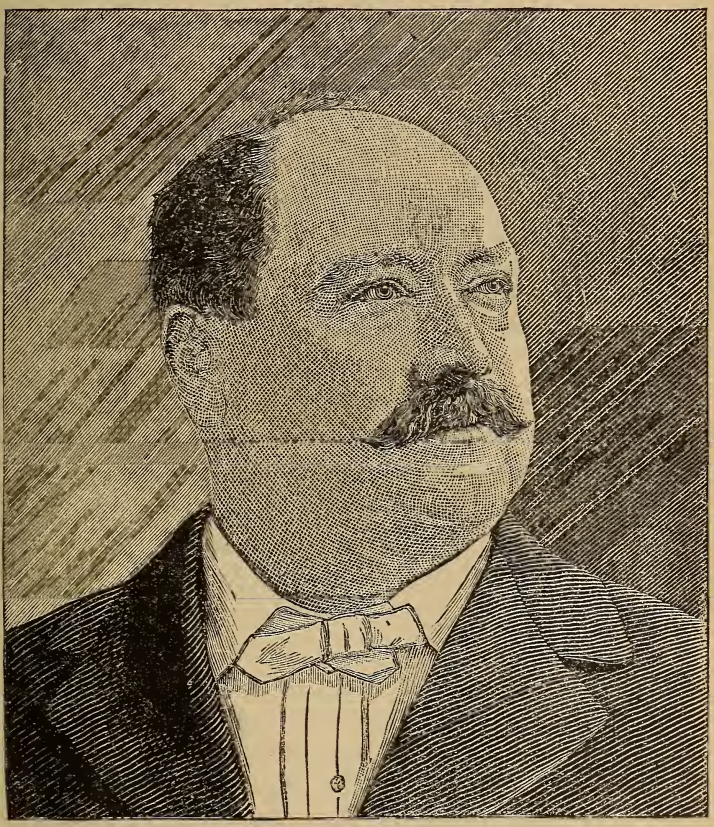
The only kind of newspaper notice a Thespian might not court, but which, once printed, would be looked upon philosophically as so much printers' ink obtained for nothing — so much advertising had that wasn't paid for — is such a one as the announcement of the attempt of a sheriff to lasso Miss Fanny Davenport, in order that he might be able to hold her long enough to read a writ of some sort to her.

Different actors and actresses have different ways of advertising themselves. The interview is a favorite with some, and often the interview is so arranged that the player can appear before the newspaper man in some eccentric attitude that will attract more attention than all the player could say if he talked for one hundred years. Harry Sargent likes a reporter to see Modjeska, and as the visitor enters he finds the Polish actress firing across the room with a pistol at a small target, which she manages to hit every time. Displaying diamonds is another scheme to catch the unwary newspaper man. Sending along photographs is expected to throw an editor into an ecstacy of liberality out of which he will come with at least a half-column puff of the pretty creature whose counterpart presentment has been sent to him. Diamond robberies

are worth at least a column. Falling heir to $5,000,000 or more will bring an interview that will be worth almost as much as the legacy. In everything an actor or an actress says and does the newspaper will find something worth printing, and in printing it the paper does exactly what the actor or actress wants — places him or her before the public. Mme. Janauschek gets a slight jolt in going down the shaft of a Colorado mine, and the country is immediately informed that she has had a narrow escape from death. Minnie Maddern, a new star who expects to rival Lotta, is made a brevet officer of the Continental Guards of New Orleans, and her manager feels assured that the people of the United States would not sleep well if they didn't hear about it within twenty-four hours, so he gets the Associated Press to telegraph it in all directions, that at least a few lives may be saved. A Bohemian prince presents Emma Thursby, at Prague, with a pair of nightingales, and about ten lines of every newspaper this side of the Atlantic are wasted in making the silly announcement. The souvenir and flower "rackets" both carry a certain weight, and the lithograph that fills the eye as one gazes into a shoe store window is a glory that can never fade from the optic that has even for a second of time dwelt upon it.

Minnie Palmer, if all reports be true, came to the front some time ago with a new bid for a free advertisement. She entertained a Louisville *Courier-Journal* reporter with a display that must have made the young man blush. "Our company has got into the chemise fever," exclaimed Minnie, artlessly, "and we're trying to see which can make the prettiest one. I'll show them to you," and then, regardless of the helpless man's blushes, she disemboweled a trunk and buried him beneath an avalanche of snowy underwear.

Their construction was minutely explained, and then the conversation naturally led to flannels, which Minnie confidentially remarked could not be worn by actors because of the risk of colds when compelled to



ERNESTI ROSSI.

leave them off. The theme could scarcely be pursued further than flannels, and the interview closed with Minnie's confession that she didn't like to be hugged on the stage in warm weather. In winter, and unen-

cumbered by flannels, the operation was not so distasteful. All of this may seem irrelevant, and having very little to do with dramatic art, but it made a column for Minnie all the same.

The Abbott Kiss, invented by John T. McEnnis, a reporter on the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, but always claimed by Jimmy Morrissey, who was her agent at the time, traveled everywhere and was printed in every newspaper from New York to San Francisco. It had just about played out when in 1881, during the prevalence of small-pox, Miss Abbott had herself vaccinated on one of her lower limbs, and again the papers advertised her. She afterwards acted in the capacity of interviewer for the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, and was commissioned to get a talk out of Patti, but spent all the time she was with the diva in kissing and hugging her, and when she came away from her had nothing to write about. Still Miss Abbott is a hard-working, gifted, and agreeable little lady, and must be regarded as the best lyric prima donna America can boast of.

Speaking about Patti: she came to the United States under foreign management, and with all her sweetness and beauty of voice and the greatness of her reputation, she could do nothing until an American manager who understood the art of advertising took hold of her. He began his work at once by decorating his theatre in lavish style for her first concert, and completed his initial triumph by causing a crowd of young fellows to unhitch the horses from Patti's carriage and run with the vehicle through the streets to her hotel. The report next day said the amateur horses were society swells, and so the news went into every State of the Union. Neilson's carriage was dragged through the street in the same way once at

Toronto. Patti got another free "ad." by visiting Paddy Ryan, the pugilist John Sullivan knocked out of time, in his training quarters at New Orleans, just as Bernhardt went to see Englehardt's whale at Boston for the sake of the advertisement she got.

Just as Schneider kicked herself into the good graces of the Parisians, Catherine Lewis, of "Olivette" fame, managed to "fling" herself into popularity here. The Lewis fling in the farandole was known and sought after everywhere. It was a wild and wayward tossing of limbs and arms that caught the eye and held the attention not so much because there was anything artistic in it, but because one expected every minute to see it grow less and less restrained until it broke out into something like the reckless indecency of the cancan. It advertised Catherine Lewis as she has not been advertised since, and as she probably never will be again. As the "fling" is not dead yet I will try to describe it. After the solo and while the first chorus is being given she moves back with the other dancers, throwing her arms from right to left and left to right again, when the dancers came to a standstill. *Olivette* is seen posing in a lop-sided, Pisa-like attitude, with both arms and head inclining to the left. The chorus is repeated, and as the repetition begins the dancers turn themselves loose with *Olivette* in the van. "Oho" she sings and swings to the left; "Oho" to the right, "Oho" to the left again, when out pops the left slipper, followed swiftly by the right ditto, and the toe of the latter foot-covering tumbles over the horizon of the orchestra leader's head, and there is a confusion of embroidery and white linen and silk hose that fills the eye of the man in the parquette with a flash of joy and causes a warm still wind to roll in a breezeful way around his cardiacal region. "Oho,"

"Oho" and "Oho" again, with more body throwing, and this time the elevation of the toe of the left slipper above the line of vision, just a little higher than before, followed by three more "Oho's," and the quivering of the satin slipper on the right foot high over the foot-lights and in close range to the man with field glasses to his eyes who is sitting in the first row of the parquette. And that's all there is to the farandole — nine swings or throws of the body and three kicks every time she comes down the stage, the altitude of the kick growing with each succeeding effort until the last spasmodic, ærial evolution of the satin slipper brings about a display of linen that would do credit to the lingerie counter of a dry goods store. *Olivette* has the attention of the entire audience while this is going on. She goes up and comes down the stage twice, swinging and kicking with an anatomical riot behind her, every female member of the company from the chorus girl up to the *Countess* vying with *Olivette* in sending the farandole off with a hurrah and multiplicity of "flings." When the chorus has come o an end, there is a bold encore for its repetition, and away they go again.

Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!
Then would they be missing,
Surely the girls went round about
So long it took them finding out.
Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!
Till something like kissing,
Told as plainly as could be
Where were he and she.

Miss Lewis at one time while in New York was freely advertised in both meanings of the word, because she sold tickets for her benefit in her room at the hotel, where all could apply to purchase them.

Maggie Duggan, a young lady until recently compar-

atively unknown, has suddenly made herself famous by nightly kicking her slipper to the top of the Bijou Theatre, New York. She is a comic opera singer.

SLIPPERS FOR FREE PUFFS.

This is lofty limb work that Mlle. Sara, the original high kicker, might envy.

Emilie Melville, an operatic star of California, in look-

ing over her stock of presents could think of nothing more suitable or anything that would prove more acceptable to the dramatic critics of San Francisco and her friends than to give each one of her slippers. So she held a reception; and, dressed in Oriental toilet, she presented each as he came with one of the tiny silken slippers in which her tootsies used to slumber on the stage. It was such a novel proceeding that Miss Melville got more gratuitous puffing than she could have paid for with the profits of one of her best seasons.

Henry Mapleson, whom I know has no fear of the newspaper man, but rather courts his society and wooes the columns of his paper, made the following ridiculous statement (to a reporter) concerning the manner in which he and his wife, Marie Roze, were pestered by reporters on the road: "They began early in the morning. When I first opened my bed-room door I was sure to find one or two outside of it. No detail was too small for them. They would follow us around and give scraps of our conversation, and one fellow even sat at the same dinner-table with us in Kansas City and printed a list of all the things my wife ate, making it about five times as long as the truth called for, and adding such trifles as four oranges, six pieces of cake, etc. My wife was so angry when this account appeared in the afternoon paper that we determined to have our supper in our room, and, as the landlord would not consent to that, I bought a steak during the evening, and Marie Roze, still dressed as *Helen of Troy*, began to cook it over a spirit lamp. We were congratulating ourselves that no reporter would know anything about that supper, when a knock was given on the door. 'Who's there?' I called out. The answer came back through the keyhole: 'I am a reporter of the *Morning Buzzard*, and I want to know what you

had for supper. That *Evening Crow* fellow got ahead of me on the dinner, but I'll fetch him on the supper.' ''

A story that illustrates, in an exaggerated way, though, the tricks of the dramatic profession, is told of a shrewd agent who found himself in Mansfield, Ohio, with a company on his hands and pursued by bad business so relentlessly that he began to have doubts that he would ever see Union Square again. In this strait he called his never-failing wits to his aid and devised a plan straightway that led him out of the difficulty, as had happened to him many a time before. He went to the room of his star — his leading lady — and knocked. He was admitted. "Why, Sam," said she, "what do you want at this hour?"

"I want your ear," said he.

"Oh, is that all," said the leading lady, recovering from her pallor; "I thought — but no matter; go on."

"You know business is bad," said he.

"Well, I should smile," said the artiste; "since I haven't had any salary for four weeks. What's the new racket."

"It's this," said the agent: "If we expect to go out of this town we've got to do something Napoleonic. And you've got to do it."

"You forget my sex," said she.

"No, I don't," said he; "there may be a Napoleon in petticoats as well as in trousers."

"Very well, what is it?"

"I want to get a column in each of the daily papers."

"Well, I guess you'll want it, for all the newspaper boys know we've got a snide show this time," she said.

"Well, I guess not, if you'll do what I tell you," said the artful agent.

"What is that?" inquired the guileless actress.

"You know the railroad bridge outside of town?"

"That shaky old wooden structure of patched logs and sleepers?"

"Yes."

"Well, what of it?"

"That bridge will get us columns in every paper for forty miles around."

"You've got 'em, Sam, sure.'

"No, I haven't. I'm solid on the biz. Now listen: I want you to go to-morrow and stand in the middle of that bridge when the two 2:20 trains pass each other going in opposite directions."

"Well, you are fresh. What'll I do that for?"

"For an 'ad.'"

"And where will I be when the trains pass?"

"Why, if you're smart and listen to me, you'll be clinging to the trestle-work underneath until they pass over you, then I'll head on back to the hotel and have all the reporters come up and interview you, and then there will be columns published, the house will be filled that night and we will rake in a heavy stake."

The actress saw the point and had the pluck to execute the project of the agent. She stood on the bridge at the appointed time. She shrieked in the most frantic manner. The engineer reversed the engine and whistled down brakes, but in spite of all the train passed over her. There was a great sensation. She was dragged out from the trestle-work and taken to the hotel. The papers which would not take the advertisement of the show because the manager could not pay in advance sent reporters to interview the actress on her narrow escape, and gave columns to the company. The result was a series of full houses and the "snides" made a triumphant march eastward on the impetus of the shrewd agent's "gag."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ACTRESS AND THE INTERVIEWER.

In no other country in the world does the interviewer's profession thrive as in these United States. From the cabinet minister — nay, the President himself — down to the common felon, all at different times are liable to what is called "the pressure of the pumping process." Some classes naturally like being interviewed, because all publicity adds to their importance and notoriety. The politicians are a specimen of this species. Then, again, another class regards the interview as a legitimate means of advertising and of attracting public attention to themselves and their doings. This class specially includes the dramatic profession. An enterprising manager is always ready to introduce his star to a journalist. Actresses and prima donne are to a great degree public personages, and there is an insatiable desire on the part of individuals to learn something of the foot-light favorites when they have doffed the stage costume, rubbed off the paint and powder, and become, as it were, for the time being an ordinary mortal. Hence, the newspapers have catered to this popular inquisitiveness, and there is scarcely an actress or sweet singer of note who has not passed the ordeal of the interviewing fiend. Mr. Henry W. Moore, city editor and dramatic critic of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, who has done as much interviewing in this line as any newspaper man in the Western country,

thus records his impressions of the operatic and dramatic celebrities whom he has met: —

Adelina Patti, the *casta diva*, always receives the journalist attired in handsome toilettes. Her marriage with the Marquis de Caux rendered her aristocratic in manners, and her behavior always has in it a tinge of *noblesse oblige*. There is an almost imperceptible flavor of condescension in her tone, which, while courteous, is rather formal. Since her separation from De Caux, La Marquise has become more accessible, and both she and Nicolini are almost warm in their effusions to journalists.

Christine Nilsson receives the interviewer pleasantly, but rather dignified in manner. She is somewhat cold in conversation, but her manners are always courteous. She talks little.

Etelka Gerster likes the interviewer. At first she regarded him as an American curiosity, but having learned his value she began to caress him. Gerster is not at all so sweet in private life as is generally believed. The Hungarian prima donna is very passionate and quick-tempered, and rules her husband, Dr. Gardine, with her whims. In the presence of the journalist she conceals her claws beneath her velvety hand and is sweetness itself. She talks much, dotes on America and the American people, and all that sort of gush. Her dresses are not particularly artistic, conveying the impression that she is slovenly in this regard.

Clara Kellogg submits to an interview as if it were a regular business transaction. Her mother is always present and will frequently make suggestions. Miss Kellogg chats pleasantly, but she has no warmth in her manner and no magnetism in her conversation.

Annie Louise Cary is what the journalists term a

"jolly" girl. She does not care a whit what she says or does. She will laugh and chat as if the interviewer were an old acquaintance. She greets him with a spontaneous warmth and familiarity which are pleasant to him. He may ask the most inquisitive questions and she will reply with a shrewd smile. Amiable, good-tempered and lively in disposition, she is a great favorite with newspaper men.

Minnie Hauk is impetuosity personified. Minnie usually has a grievance against her manager, and she will pour her woes into the journalist's ears with remarkable loquacity. But Minnie has a mother. After the interviewer is gone Minnie will send him a note or a messenger requesting him in Heaven's name not to publish what she said or she would be undone. Yet, the next time Minnie meets a night of the quill she reiterates her woes and wrongs with the same impetuosity. She is frank to a fault, and confides a good deal in human nature. Her frankness has involved her several times in trouble. She is very apt to become unreasonably jealous of any other prima donna in the troupe, and thus always keeps the impressario in a state of nervousness.

Emma Abbott is the gusher *par excellence*. At the first glance of the interviewer she rushes towards him, seizes him with both her hands, is Oh, so, so glad to see him! She talks with great rapidity and unceasingly. The scribe to her is an old familiar friend. She insists on his calling on her, dining with her, etc., etc. Her friendliness is overwhelming. She loads the journalist with favors, and almost embraces him in the ardor of her affection.

Sarah Bernhardt has all the French warmth and demonstrativeness. She is witty and vivacious in her conversation, really likes journalists, and will spend a whole day with them. She never tires, and is a study

to the newspaper man. She is, however, not insensible to flattery. Her curiosity about things American is very keen. Being a delightful entertainer, she was very popular with the journalistic profession. She is fond of inviting them to breakfast.

Clara Morris is an excellent subject for an interview. Miss Morris always prepares to receive the representative of the press in some picturesque attitude or pose. She has a fine perception of artistic effect, and never loses sight of the fact that it is an interview, and hence has an eye to what will appear in print. In her discourse she aims to be epigrammatic and witty; likes to be novel and original. Her knowledge is very varied, and she converses with ease and fluency. Her face sparkles, and her reception is always extremely cordial.

Modjeska, otherwise the Countess Bozenta, is, perhaps, the best educated actress on the stage. She is a gifted linguist, well read in French, German, and English literature. She is a charming conversationalist. In manners she is a perfect lady, without any stage eccentricities. She is a delightful hostess, and dispenses hospitality most gracefully. Her bearing is courteous but thoroughly friendly, and there is the impress of *la grande dame* in her demeanor. She is partial to canine pets.

Adelaide Neilson captured every journalist who ever interviewed her. She seemed to bend all her energies to captivate her visitor. Her remarkable beauty was a powerful aid, and the charm of her manner was irresistible. When necessary, she was almost a man of business, and transacted her affairs with much ability. Poor Adelaide was too potent a spell for ordinary interviewers to withstand, and she always carried her point.

Mary Anderson is a great talker. Her mother and

step-father, Dr. Hamilton Griffin, are usually in attendance at an interview. She is decided in her opinions, and expresses her views fearlessly, but her remarks are superficial. She is lively and a regular tom-boy, and hesitates at nothing.

Fanny Davenport, who is noted for her expensive costumes on the stage, is the reverse in private life. She is nearly always in a *neglige* attire and looks somewhat slovenly. Fanny is rather averse to the interviewer, but when she submits she is as charming and pleasant a hostess as can be imagined. But nevertheless she thinks it a decided bore to entertain.

Maggie Mitchell is a whole-souled, generous woman, without a spark of affectation. She is frank, pleasant, and amiable.

Lotta, vivacious Lotta, is very demure in the presence of her mother and the journalist. She is quite unlike the Lotta of the stage. Mrs. Crabtree joins in the conversation, which Lotta carries on in a very subdued but friendly manner.

Janauschek is firm, solid, and determined in her convictions. She has strong likes and dislikes. She talks with much emphasis.

Mrs. D. P. Bowers is a pleasant lady to visit. She is quite motherly in her manners. Her conversation contains much shrewd, caustic depth.

Charlotte Thompson is intellectual. She possesses what the French call *esprit* and her conversation is always enjoyable.

Emma Thursby is an interesting lady. The queen of the concert-room is vivacious, lively, and talkative. She is exceedingly fond of representatives of the press.

Marie Roze is only an indifferent entertainer. She is very fond of pet dogs. The effort is always visible in her conversation, and the visitor feels that she believes she is merely doing a necessary duty.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A FEW FOOT-LIGHT FAVORITES.

Little Peggy, afterwards the famous Mistress Woffington, was down at the shores of Liffey drawing water for her mother, when Madame Violante, a rope-walker, met her, and taking a liking to the girl, made terms with the parents and obtained possession of her. Madame Violante walked the rope with a child tied to her feet, and lovely little Peggy for a while assisted in this way at her mistress's entertainments. When the Madame got to Dublin she found a juvenile company playing "Cinderella" there, and at once began the organization of a class of children, who appeared in the play with Peggy as one of the bright luminaries. This was her introduction to the stage, which she trod with such brilliant success in after years. Nor was she the only one of the famous old English actresses trained to the drama from childhood. All through the history of theatricals, from and before Woffington's time, children were made participants in the play, and the seeds planted thus early ripened into the richest fruit. Until a very recent date it was not deemed the duty of anybody to interfere with this kind of training — not even with the barbarous treatment to which children training for the circus ring were submitted. Less than a half century ago the Viennese children went through the country dancing, and were unmolested by any philanthropically inclined body or any excessively humane individual. The

juvenile "Pinafore" companies of two seasons ago were regarded kindly by press and public; and, indeed, until quite recently no extraordinary war was made against presenting the talents of a child actor or actress to the people. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has, however, organized a stubborn resistance to the employment of little ones in stage representations; and while it may be well to exercise some authority for the protection of infants and for the preservation of the stage from a deluge of child-talent, there can be no justification in allowing that authority to run riot in plucking every blossom from the tree of histrionism, and erecting a permanent barrier against the development of native talent, when any happens to exist in a child of tender years. The experience of more than two centuries shows that the best training is that which begins earliest, which begins slowly, and widens only with the slow progress of the years. There are very few actors or actresses who have walked out of private life into the glare of the foot-lights with anything like success. The amateur may sometimes be suddenly metamorphosed into a full-fledged professional, with a bit of reputation to help him along the road he has chosen to travel, but this happens very rarely. Only those who begin early and study hard, and who have often to wait a long time for recognition, gain a place in the Thespian temple, and it is to those whose infant eyes open almost upon the mysteries and wonders of the mimic world, whose little limbs grow to strength behind the scenes, and whose lives are identified completely with all that have place or being behind the foot-lights, that it is given to hope for position in the profession into which they have been born instead of kidnapped.

I think the society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

(322) LITTLE CORINNE.

Children did a very good thing when it took Little Corinne from the stage. The child was overtaxed far beyond her years; there was nothing very clever about her any more than there would be about a school-girl of the same age who had been taught to speak her piece and did it boldly, but awkwardly and inartistically. It was more painful than pleasant to sit out a performance of "Cinderella" with this offspring of the Kemble family in the role of the heroine of the glass slipper, and it was a temporary blessing to the public while the little thing was kept out of the way. Like all the precocious ventures on the stage, Corinne will gradually fade from memory, and the only thought left of her will be a painful recollection of her childish efforts to please the grown people who were foolish enough to go to the theatre to see her.

The young man or the young lady who has given years of study to preparation for the stage finds the debut night one fraught with fears and hopes. There are friends behind the scenes and friends in the audience willing to overlook faults and exaggerate excellencies; but there are cold, stern critics, too, anxious to puncture the new candidate for public favor in every tender spot their cruel eyes can search out, and there is the great public, that fickle body whose applause or condemnation often depends upon the whim of the moment. The effort is an enormous one to the new player; the suspense, frightful. A whole life's work may be swept out of sight in a moment, and the life itself blighted forever. But when the moment of success arrives — what a thrill of joy the triumph sends to the heart of the actress, if actress it be! What a dream of glory she already begins to live in! How her brain throbs and her heart bounds, and all the world seems a paradise, beautiful and fair as Eden was

when it left the hands of the Creator! Friends crowd around, the house is ringing with applause, and she tears away from the congratulations and kisses and hand-shakings to step out before the curtain, and, with glowing face and tears in her eyes, kisses her hand and makes a profoundly thankful obeisance to the audience. Then she returns to her crowding friends on the stage, from the manager down to the call-boy and scene-shifters, and her ears ring with praise and encouraging words until it is time for the curtain to go up once more.

The debut of Emma Livry, an artiste who promised to lead a very brilliant career, but who was suddenly and early cut down by death, is described in a very interesting manner by one who was present. It was at the Grand Opera House, Paris, and the theatre was filled from parquette to dome with an extraordinary audience. Louis Napoleon was there, and the Empress Eugenie; princes and dukes filled the boxes, and the nobility of France, representative Americans and prominent Englishmen were in the audience. Emma Livry was then only sixteen. From her earliest childhood, says the writer, she had been devoted to the art of dancing — though this was no extraordinary thing, for there are a large number of girls always in training for the Grand Opera in Paris, who are taken at the age of four years, and kept in constant practice until they reach womanhood, when they appear in public. But this girl had shown extraordinary genius. In her later years the celebrated dancer, Marie Taglioni, Countess de Voisius, hearing of the new dancer, left her villa on the Lake of Como, and her palace in Venice, to come to Paris to give the girl lessons. Her improvement was miraculous. Taglioni said she would renew the triumphs she herself had won in former days.

And now she glided upon the stage. The brilliant audience ceased their chatter as she appeared. The occasion took the character of what it was afterwards called in the newspapers — "a great solemnity." She was very young and was just at that period in the life of a girl when her figure is apt to be what old-fashioned people call raw-boned. She was tall, thin, and pale. Her face was not handsome. Her form gave no evidence of physical strength.

She was received in a hush of silence. "Let us see," this great audience seemed to say, "what you really can do in this poetic art." Any one who could have connected sensuality or grossness with this girl would have been baser than a sybarite; and yet her dress was the conventional dress of ballet dancers — short to the calf of the leg but thickly clad above.

She began. O Grace, you never found a prototype till now! O Painting, Sculpture, you paled before this supple, elastic, firm, yet dainty tread. At the conclusion of her first movement, when with a gush of sweet music she sprang like a fawn to the foot-lights, and extending her slender arms and delicate hands towards the audience, as if to ask, "Come, what is the verdict on me now?" a burst of enthusiastic applause, loud shouts of "Brava!" and "Bravissima!" "C'est magnifique!" waving of perfumed handkerchiefs, a deluge of sweet flowers formed the response.

The whole evening was a series of triumphs. The Emperor and Empress sent an aid-de-camp behind the scene to offer her the Imperial congratulations. Marie Taglioni, accompanied by her noble husband, sought the girl also, and taking from her breast a magnificent diamond star, which had been given her in former days by the Emperor of Russia, "Here," said she,

(326) TAGLIONI CONGRATULATING EMMA LIVRY.

"take this the queen of dance, Marie Taglioni, is dead — long live the queen, Emma Livry!"

As I passed out amongst the dense crowd, the writer continues, I saw a woman of middle age, and respectably dressed, leaning against one of the marble columns in the vestibule. Her face was flushed and she was wiping tears from her eyes.

"You weep, Madonna?" said a gentleman who was passing.

"Yes, Monsieur," she replied, "but it is with joy. Who would not be proud of such a daughter, and of such a tribute to her genius?"

There are few favorites of the public to-day who have not fought their way to the front inch by inch, who have not sacrificed everything for their art, toiling through the day that the work of the night might show improvement — very few who have not served years of apprenticeship on the stage before the moment of success arrived. And this has been the rule always. Nell Gwynne, the fish-girl, whose beauty and bright repartee attracted the attention of Lacy, the actor, and who peddled oranges to the audience before she began to amuse them on the stage, managed without much trouble, and during a short stage experience, to win the heart of Charles II., who made her his mistress and retained her while he lived, his parting words to those around his death-bed being, "See that poor Nelly doesn't starve;" but Nelly did starve. She died in poverty and left a line of dukes to perpetuate her plebeian blood in royal veins. She died in November, 1687, in her thirty-seventh year.

Lola Montez, the pretty Irish girl who in her fourteenth year eloped with one Capt. James to avoid a disagreeable marriage, accompanied him to India, where they got mutually tired of each other and re-

turning to England studied dancing and went on the stage, was another of those fortunate and unfortunate fascinating women whose lives fade away fast and who after a brief hey-day of luxuries lie down in rags and poverty to seek a needed rest that is never broken. She won the hearts of kings, led a revolution in Poland, and finally, after being driven from her Bavarian castle where, as Countess of Lansfield she had ruled, and strutting a brief hour in London in male attire, died in this country January 17, 1861. Her ashes rest in Greenwood Cemetery, but she was saved from a pauper's grave only through the charity of some friend. During her life she had thrown away millions. Fallin, the husband of Maude Granger, is the son of the man with whom Lola Montez had her last escapade, Fallin, Sr., deserting his family in New York to accompany Lola to San Francisco. Her real name was Marie Dolores Eliza Rospanna Gilbert.

Another child of genius whom waywardness and frailty brought to an early grave was Adelaide McCord, better known to the world as Adah Isaacs Menken. She was born near New Orleans, June 15, 1835, and when still young went on the stage as a ballet dancer in one of the theatres of the Crescent City. She had been expelled from school, and tiring of her native village, where she had created a sensation by embracing the Jewish faith, she made the journey to New Orleans, and as I have said went on the stage. Her career there was not a very brilliant one until she began playing *Mazeppa*, the part with which her name has since been identified. Prior to her time men had appeared in this role. Her first appearance was on Monday night, June 17, 1861, in the Green Street Theatre, New York, then under the management of Capt. John B. Smith. On the first attempt to go up the run the

horse after making one turn fell, crashing through the scenery with the Menken on its back. Horse and rider were picked up, and after some delay the ascent was made amidst a great deal of enthusiasm. The appearance of so beautiful a woman as Menken in the scarcity of clothing that *Mazeppa* requires created a furore, and from that time her success was assured. She fought spiritedly in the combat scene, breaking her sword and otherwise won the good opinion of her first audience. Previous to this she had married Alexander Menken, a musician in Galveston, but by this time also she had obtained an Indiana divorce. While in New York she met John C. Heenan, fresh from his victory over Tom Sayers, and after a brief courtship married him. Another Indiana divorce soon dissolved this knot, as it did a third time in the case of Orpheus C. Kerr (Robt. H. Newell). All this time her fame was growing. She went to London, and after setting the English metropolis on fire with her beauty returned to New York, where she married James Barclay, a merchant, in whose mansion she and her friends held such wild orgies that Barclay was glad when she fled to Paris, where she was stricken down in the midst of her mad career, in 1868. The brief but expressive epitaph, "Thou knowest," is carved upon her tomb.

Mary Anderson, the tragedienne, is the most phenomenal success of late years. She was born July 28, 1859, in Sacramento, California. Her parents removed to Louisville when she was one year and a half old, and there she was educated in the Ursuline Convent. She had a longing to be an actress from her earliest years, and all her readings tended in the direction of the stage. She was taken away from school at the age of thirteen, to pursue her studies for

the profession to which she seemed to be so strongly inclined. At the age of fifteen she went to Cincinnati to see Charlotte Cushman act. While there she called on Miss Cushman, who said she could give her only a five-minute audience. Miss Anderson recited passages from "Richard III.," Schiller's "Maid of Orleans," and "Hamlet." She remained with Miss Cushman three hours, and the great actress had such confidence in her talents that she told her to study a few hours each day for a year and then she might go on the stage. This Miss Anderson did. An accident of some kind or other left Macauley's Theatre in Louisville with a Saturday night for which there was no attraction. Macauley knew Miss Anderson's desire to go on the stage, and meeting her step-father, Dr. Hamilton Griffin, in the street, told him the girl, who was then only sixteen, might have the theatre that night. Miss Anderson was overjoyed. She chose *Juliet* for her debut, got a costume hurriedly together and after one rehearsal and three days' preparation, appeared before a large audience, and made a decided hit. This was on November 27, 1875. Macauley was so pleased with the debutante that he gave her his first open week at starring terms. She then went to St. Louis, in March, 1876, and added greatly to the reputation she had won in her home city. Mr. John W. Norton supported her. Ben DeBar sent her to his New Orleans Theatre, and while in the Crescent City she was presented, by the citizens, with a check for $500, and the Washington artillery presented her with a jewelled badge of the battalion. Returning to Louisville again she continued her studies through the summer, began starring the following season, and has been before the public ever since. She is a young lady of remarkable personal beauty, intelligent and accom-

plished, a hard student, and one of the noblest and fairest of her sex that ever adorned the stage.

Lotta Mignon Crabtree, another of the very successful women on the stage, and one of the brightest soubrettes that ever delighted a public, was born at No. 750 Broadway, New York, on November 7, 1847. In 1854 her people removed to California, and Lotta made her first appearance on a stage at a concert given at Laport; her second appearance was at Petaluma, in 1858, when she played *Gertrude* in "The Loan of a Lover." She starred, they say, for two years as La Petite Lotta. Before she made her appearance in New York we hear of her in San Francisco at Burt's New Idea and Gilbert's Melodeon — concert saloons — where Joe Murphy, Barnard, Cotton, Pest, Burbank, Billy Sheppard, Backus and other prominent minstrels were engaged. The Worrell Sisters, Maggie Moon (now Mrs. Williamson) and Lotta were in the company, and there was great rivalry between them at the time. The theatre was crowded every night up to the close of the first part in which there was a "walk around," in which the girls entered into the liveliest kind of a competition. Each did her utmost to outdance the other. Each favorite had her host of admirers and the demonstration on the part of the audience was intense. After the "walk around" the house became almost empty, showing that this was the attractive feature. Lotta was very ambitious, and whenever she failed to score a triumph she would retire to her dressing-room and cry bitterly. From San Francisco her parents took her to New York, where she gave her first performance at Niblo's Saloon, June 1, 1864. She wasn't a success in New York, so she went to Chicago and played "The Seven Sisters" at McVicker's. Fortune began to smile on her there,

and her success dates from this point. One night during this engagement an unknown admirer threw a

LOTTA.

$300 gold watch and chain upon the stage. Lotta cannot sing any more, but she kicks as cutely as of

yore, dances neatly, and is as vivacious as a girl of sixteen.

Maggie Mitchell, who has been a great favorite ever since she produced "Fanchon" at Laura Keene's

MAGGIE MITCHELL.

Theatre, June 9, 1862, was born in New York in 1832, of poor parents. She began to play child parts at the old Bowery and in 1851 had advanced to responsible business. She made a hit at Burton's Theatre as *Julia* in "The Soldier's Daughter," and

then began starring in "The French Spy," "The Young Prince," and like plays, but did nothing remarkable until, as I have already said, she made a hit in "Fanchon," an adaptation of George Sands's novel "La Petite Fadette." Following this came "Jane Eyre," "The Pearl of Savoy," and "Mignon." Miss Mitchell has amassed a fortune by her efforts. Her name off the stage is Mrs. Paddock, she having

EMMA ABBOTT.

married Mr. Henry Paddock, of Cleveland, Ohio, in Troy, New York, October 15, 1868.

Emma Abbott, the finest of American lyric artistes, after the usual freaks of an ambitious childhood and the trials of an operatic training in Milan and Paris, was given a London engagement by Mr. Gye and made her debut at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, on May 2, 1876. The debut was a success,

and with the congratulation of friends, the best wishes of all who knew her, and the predictions of the best judges of vocal music that she had a brilliant future ahead of her, she set out on a tour of the provinces, singing through England and Ireland and everywhere winning the love and applause of the people. Returning to her own country the artiste gave two seasons of concerts, and began to sing light opera. She has created the role of *Virginia* in "Paul and Virginia," and *Juliet* in "Romeo and Juliet," both which operas she introduced here. Her repertory includes, besides the two named, "Mignon," "Maritana," "The Bohemian Girl," "Martha," "Il Trovatore," and "Faust." She has a sweet, clear, crystalline voice, which she uses to great effect, is a charming lady personally, a careful, pure, and energetic artiste, and altogether wholly deserves to be called, as she is, "Honest Little Emma."

Marion Elmore, a charming little soubrette who is looking after Lotta's laurels, is a native of England and has been on the stage since her third year, having then played *Meenie* with Joe Jefferson in "Rip Van Winkle." She was born in 1860 in a tent on the gold fields of Sandhurst, Australia. She came to this country with Lydia Thompson in 1878, and played in burlesque until the season of 1881–2 when she took a soubrette part in Willie Edouin's "Sparks." She is now starring under the management of Hayden & Davis in "Chispa," a California play.

Edwin Booth, the illustrious son of Junius Brutus Booth, was born at Belair, near Baltimore, Maryland, in November, 1833. He was his father's dresser, accompanying him on all his tours, and receiving from him lessons in histrionism. On September 10, 1849, he made his first appearance at the Boston Museum as

Tressel, in "Richard III.," and on May 22, 1850, appeared at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, as *Wilford*, in the "Iron Chest." In 1850 he distinguished himself by playing "Richard III.," at the Chatham Theatre, New York, in the place of his father, who had disappointed. His first independent appearance in the metropolis, however, was made on May 4, 1857, as *Richard III.*, at the Metropolitan, afterwards the Winter Garden Theatre. In 1851 he went to California and thence wandered to the Sandwich Islands and Australia in 1854. In 1857 he returned to New York. He was known as an actor of ability, but it was not until his famous engagements at the Winter Garden that he succeeded in making a really profound impression on the public. During this revival "Hamlet" run one hundred nights and Mr. Booth at once stepped to a foremost position before the public. His disastrous investment in the theatre that bore his name in New York is well known. It compelled him to go into bankruptcy in 1872, since which time he has been the most successful of American stars. He has been twice married — to Mary Devlin, an actress in 1861, who died in 1862, and to Mary McVicker, daughter of J. H. McVicker, of Chicago, who died in 1881. His *Hamlet* is the finest interpretation of that character on the American stage, and this with *Bertuccio*, in "The Fool's Revenge," and *Brutus*, are his best impersonations.

John McCullough, though born in Ireland, came to this country when very young. He was poor and an orphan, and poverty had been "looking in at the door" of the humble home where he passed his boyhood for many a year. Yet the tenant farm which his father held was once the pride of all the country round, and the child's earliest recollections called to mind a happy

time which too soon, alas, passed away. His mother had died when the son was a mere lad, and misfortunes came not singly but in hosts after that bereavement. Sir Harvey Bruce, the landlord of the estate, though a kindly man, as Mr. McCullough testified, claimed his legal rights, and all that appertained to the estate held by the family was taken possession of by law, and father and son driven out from their home.

"How well I recall the time," said Mr. McCullough, "and every scene and incident of that eviction — as it would, I suppose, be called now. I was a boy of about twelve years or so, and the greatest trial to me was the sale of a pony which I prized most highly. I couldn't bear to part with the pony, and Sir Harvey Bruce, who saw my grief and knew its cause, kindly arranged matters so that before long I was able to call the animal once more my own. It was an act of goodness which, of course, I have never forgotten."

Not long after the eviction the father died, and the boy was left in the care of an uncle. But, like thousands of others, young McCullough had heard of the land of freedom beyond the Atlantic, and it was not long before he decided to leave kindred and friends, and seek a home in America. With all his earthly possessions in a bundle the young lad landed at New York, and with characteristic pluck and energy began the battle for existence. He followed various callings, but soon felt within him the desire to become an actor. Fortunately the foreman of a chair factory in Philadelphia, where he was employed, sympathized with the aspirations of the future actor, and often studied with him the great Shakespearean tragedies in which McCullough afterward attained such renown.

It was in the winter of 1857 that the young aspirant for Thespian honors first stood upon the stage; and he

CALLED BEFORE THE CURTAIN.

began in Philadelphia his professional career at the munificent salary of $4 a week. For several seasons

he acted the "heavy villain" line in the Shakespearean drama, and made steady improvement in his art. A great event in his career was his engagement to support the great Forrest in 1862; for it gave him opportunities which such a man as McCullough was not slow to improve. The grand qualities which marked Forrest's acting were made the subject of careful study by the young actor, and to-day John McCullough is recognized everywhere as the successor to the famous American tragedian. His career as an actor, interrupted only by a brief managerial experience in San Francisco, has been one of steadily increasing success.

John McCullough's starring experience dates from only a few years back; yet his impersonations, with peerless *Virginius* at the head, have won fame and fortune in all parts of the country, and gained for him also the highest honors on the English stage.

J. K. Emmett, or Joe Emmett, as he is familiarly called the world over, was born in St. Louis on March 23, 1841. He early had a penchant for the stage, and could rattle bones, play a drum or do a song and dance on a cellar-door better than any of his companions. He began life as a painter, but soon left the pot and brush for the stage of the St. Louis Bowery, where his specialty was Dutch "wooden-shoe business." He could sing finely, and was as graceful as a woman. So popular did he become in his line that Dan Bryant engaged him for his New York house in 1866. Two seasons later Charles Gayler wrote "Fritz," a nonsensical play without rhyme or reason, and Emmett opened with it in Buffalo. His success was indifferent at first, but within a short time "Fritz" and Emmett became the rage, and for fifteen years the people have actually run after this star. His name and play will fill any theatre in the United States, and

in many places outside of the United States. He is the great pet of the public. Time and again has he disappointed them, but it makes no difference; the next time he announces himself ready to play they are there in throngs. Joe Emmett has friends the whole world over, and he is welcomed and admired everywhere.

John T. Raymond's real name is John T. O'Brien. He became stage-struck while clerking in a store, and after a brief amateur experience made his first appearance on the professional stage as *Lopez*, in "The Honeymoon," on June 27, 1853, and played comedy with varying fortune until 1874, when "The Gilded Age," which had been dramatized, was brought out at Rochester, New York, on August 31st, and he made an immense hit as *Col. Mulberry Sellers*. Next to *Colonel Sellers*, John T. Raymond's enduring popularity rests upon his impersonation of *Fresh, the American*, in the drama of that name, which he is now impersonating throughout the country. In connection with both his best known parts Mr. Raymond may be said to have "made" the plays they are framed in. Without them those plays would be flat, and in any other hands than his the characters which relieve them of that odium would be insipid. It is the actor's art and personal magnetism alone which make them what they are — successes. A good story, whether it be true or not, is told about Raymond and John McCullough. The latter was asked to appear as *Ingomar*, with Miss Anderson as *Parthenia*, at a benefit performance for a friend. As an additional inducement the beneficiary asked Raymond to play *Polydor*. "Certainly, with great pleasure," said Sellers; "I will travel one thousand miles any time to play *Polydor* to McCullough's *Ingomar*." The happy man ran off to

tell his good fortune to McCullough; but the tragedian, in his deepest *Virginius* voice, answered him: "No, sir, never, never again! Once and out." The explanation of Mac's refusal to have Raymond in the cast is given as follows: —

It seems that at a certain benefit in Virginia City, "Ingomar" was the play, Mr. McCullough sustaining the title role and Mr. Raymond played *Polydor*. *Polydor*, it will be remembered, is the old Greek duffer who has a mortgage on *Myron's* real estate, and presses for payment in hopes to get *Parthenia's* hand in marriage. The performance went beautifully, and the applause was liberal, for McCullough was playing his best. Raymond was the crookedest and most miserly of *Polydors*, and the savage intensity he threw into his acting surprised all who imagined he could only play light comedy. All went more than well until *Ingomar* offered himself as a slave to *Polydor* in payment of *Myron's* little account. "What, you?" screamed *Polydor*, and, apparently overcome by the thought, he "took a tumble," and fell forward upon *Ingomar*. *Ingomar* stepped back in dismay, when *Polydor*, on all fours, crept nimbly between his sturdy legs and tried to climb up on his back. The audience "took a tumble," and the roof quivered and the walls shook with roars of laughter. "D—n you," groaned *Ingomar*, *sotto voce*, "if I only had you at the wings?" But *Polydor* nimbly eluded his grasp, and, knocking right and left the dozen supes, who were on as the army, he skipped to the front of the stage and climbed up out of reach of the projecting mouldings of the proscenium. Here he clung, and, to make matters worse, grinned cheerfully at the pursuers he had escaped, and rapidly worked the string of a trick wig, the long hair of which flapped up and down in the

most ludicrous fashion. It was impossible for the play to proceed, and the curtain was rung down, leaving *Polydor* still on his lofty perch, while the audience laughed and shouted itself hoarse. And this is the reason why Mr. McCullough said, "No, sir, never again!" to Mr. Raymond's offer.

FAY TEMPLETON IN "BILLEE TAYLOR."

I may add that among the young people of the stage who are possessed of that personal magnetism that makes them popular, is Fay Templeton, who is not only pretty, but thoroughly original.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHINESE AND JAPANESE THEATRICALS.

If the Chinese must go they will have to close up the large theatres in San Francisco owned and controlled by Celestial managers. In these temples of the almond-eyed Thespis extraordinary plays are enacted running through months and even years, in a to-be-continued style, for, the Chinese dramatist, who never writes anything but tragedy of the wildest and most harrowing kind, always begins with the birth of his hero or heroine and does not let the merest incident pass until his or her friends are ready to sit down to a feast of roast pig and rice by the side of the principal character's grave. The dramas are mainly historical, and many a Chinaman who starts in to see a first-class play of the average length is on his way back to China in a coffin or box with his cue neatly folded around him for a burial robe, long before the last act of the drama is reached. So, too, the star actors frequently die before they have time to finish the play. I don't know that any American has ever had the patience to wait for the denouement of a Chinese drama, but to the saffron-skinned, horse-hair-surmounted and slanting-eyed citizen of San Francisco, his theatre is a place next in importance to the Joss House or temple, and when he once buys his season ticket for a show, he sticks to it with a pertinacity that would put an ordinary glue or cement advertisement to the blush. It is the same, too, when they patronize a theatre in which the

surroundings and language are English; once in their seats, they stay — forgetting even to go out between the acts for an opera-glass or a bottle of pop.

But to return to the Chinese theatre. Its interior differs very little from the interior of the places of amusement frequented by his American brother. The general contour and arrangement of the auditorium is pretty much the same. The men sit together on benches partitioned off into single seats in the lower portion of the house, or pit, with their little round hats on, and their pipes or cigars in their mouths; the ladies, who are not allowed into the male portion of the auditorium, have galleries for themselves whence they look down upon the actions of their male friends below. Everywhere except on the stage quiet and the utmost serenity prevail, no person in the audience moving a hand, raising a foot, or opening a lip, even when the villain is cut into ribbons by the Sunday-school hero; and at no stage of the performance does the slightest manifestation of delight or disapprobation come from the patient and enduring on-looker. In this respect John Chinamen has neglected to take a lesson from his American cousin, or to acquire the character of the howling short-haired gentlemen who apotheosize Dennis Kearney and think there is no better worshipping place in the world than "the sand lots."

The largest Chinese theatre in San Francisco is on Washington Street and was opened in 1879. Its auditorium is almost a copy of the best theatres of the large cities of the country. Its audience is seated and separated in the manner I have described, and their behavior is, in accordance with the custom of their country, quiet and respectful. The stage of the theatre, though, is a curiosity. There is no curtain, and but one scene that never

changes. On the side of the stage — or proscenium — long slips of colored paper with Chinese characters on them are hung — the adages and axioms of what is familiarly known as tea-chest literature — and numerous multi-colored lanterns shed their radiance around the place. At the back of the stage sit several musicians with tom-toms, cymbals, fiddles, and divers other instruments all of wonderful construction and with frightful capacity for setting anybody but a Chinaman crazy. These musicians seem to be as important elements in the action and meaning of the play as the actors themselves are. As soon as the performance begins they immediately tune up, and from that on until the show is over they never give the audience or the music a single rest. The play usually begins at five o'clock in the afternoon and continues until two the following morning, so it will be readily understood that the Chinese musician has a pretty wide scope for his genius, while the Chinese audience must be more than mortal to stand both the music and the actors for some hours at a stretch. The actors make themselves as hideous as possible, employing wigs and long beards with plenty of paint to disguise themselves. They stalk and stamp around in a manner highly suggestive of the English-speaking "scene-eater," and there is a great deal of stabbing and killing — thunder and blood, so to speak — which is wasted, as the audience does not seem to rise to the enthusiasm of the occasion and there are no "gallery gods" to help bring the house down. While the actors are shouting loudest, the musicians, all of whom seem to be playing different tunes, are working hardest and the din and discord of a supremely grand moment of Chinese tragedy are something horrible to hear and simply torturesome to endure. Boys or young men play the

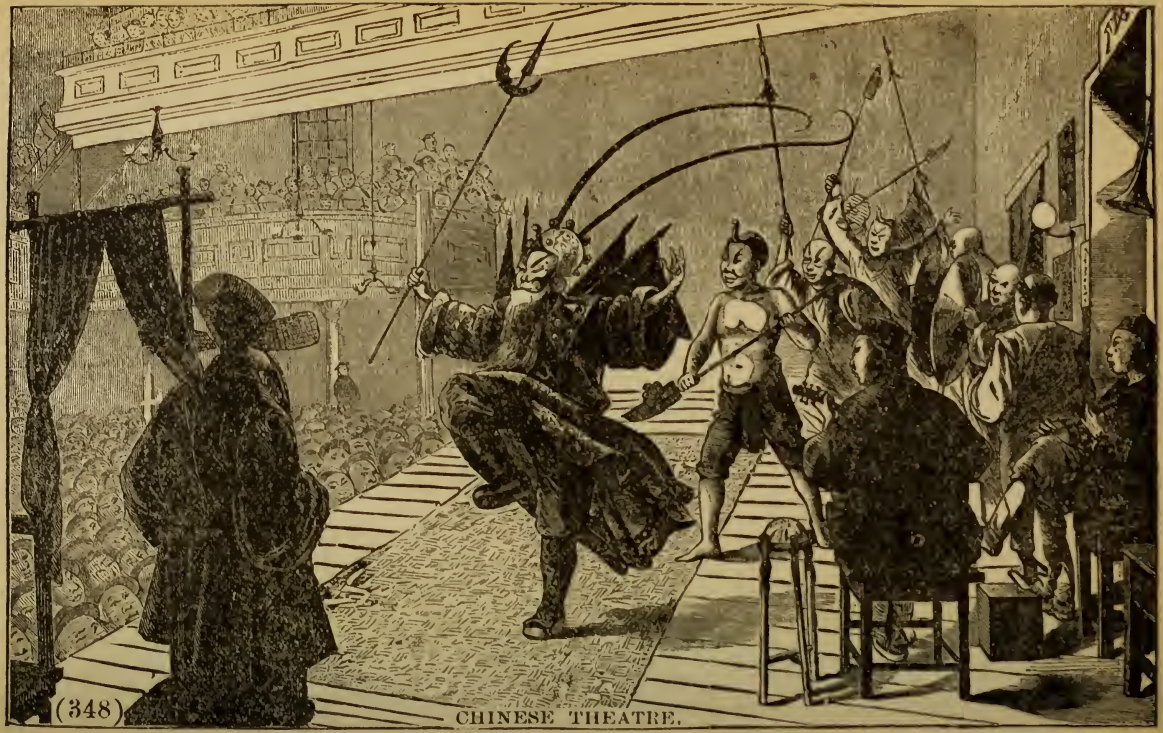
female parts as was the custom on the English stage in the time of Elizabeth. There is no levity in the performance, no prancing or dancing, nothing but the utmost severity and solemnity, which leaves me in doubt whether the Chinese go to the theatre to be amused or are compelled by some law of their country or religion to do so.

The property-room of a Chinese theatre is a very queer concern, filled up with lanterns, old clothes, spears, etc., but the most extraordinary feature of the place is the quantity of eatables that find their way into the room and down the throats of the performers. That most delicious morsel, roast pig, of whose discovery by the Celestials Charles Lamb has written so charmingly, occupies a prominent place on the board, and is frequently attacked by the actors, who appear to come off the stage as hungry as six-day go-as-you-please pedestrians are when they leave the track. When the Chinese actor is not acting or putting on his costume you may depend upon it that he is eating. This histrionic peculiarity is strongly marked among the descendants of Ho-Fi, who if they are not good tragedians have first-class appetites and stomachs whose capacity is not measured by three meagre meals a day.

A correspondent writing from Yokohama gives an idea of the amusements served up in the Japanese capital by its enterprising theatrical managers. The Japanese, says this writer, are a theatre-going people, and their taste is catered unto continually. Whether the managers accumulate riches I know not, but theatrical amusements are provided for the wants and means of all classes. At the first-class establishment is a revolving stage, upon which is placed the scenery and properties devoted to the play on the boards. The

orchestra occupy the left-hand side of the stage, or rather they are placed in an elevated pen at the left of the stage floor. The revolving part of the business is about fifteen feet from the foot-lights, the intervening space being permanent. The wings are not elaborate, and not much machinery is employed to work up effects. The inevitable trap is utilized on this stage, it being the only place that boasts of the improvement. The actors at this theatre are of the first rank, and their dresses are gorgeous in the extreme. "Regardless of expense" must be their motto; and here are produced all the famous plays known to the natives, they being all of national significance.

The Japanese are patriotic in their instincts, and do not run after strange representations with which to amuse themselves. Everything on the board is intensely Japanese — descriptive of their fables and romances, as well as reproducing actual episodes in the history of the empire. To the stranger who is alien to the language their plays are first-class pantomimes only, though one can but accord the actors rare dramatic ability. I must say, however, that the style affected in their stage step is something too awfully too too for anything. The poetry of motion is a different affair here from what is considered the correct thing elsewhere. Keene or Billy Emerson could, either of them, get a new kink in a stage walk if they could study Japanese methods a while. It costs thirty cents to enter the temples of dramatic art — that is, to be in the place for the upper tendom, the gallery — or dress circle, it may be called — which runs on both sides of the house, as well as on the end fronting the stage. This gallery is about five feet wide, and is entered from the passage-way running along it through openings in the partition without doors. It



(348) CHINESE THEATRE.

is divided into spaces of five feet or more by placing a round piece of timber of say two inches in diameter from the gallery front and the back of it. The front is elevated above the floor about fifteen inches only, as the occupants are expected to sit upon their haunches on the matted floor. Between acts tea is served to any who will buy, and smoking is allowed all over the house during the play. The body of the theatre is supplied with benches without backs for the accommodation of the audience.

There is no sharp practice in the way of reserved seats in Japanese theatres. Neither is there necessity to go outside for a clove or browned coffee. When once seated you are at your ease, not having to draw yourself up for any other fellow. The second-grade places are of a cheaper order, where one can sit on the floor, there being no seats, or stand upon the ground, there being no floor, the earth doing duty in that regard. One cent and a half and two cents and a half give the grades of the establishments. They are all, best as well as inferior, lighted with the domestic-made candle, and when the original dips of our grandmothers are remembered, the kind of a candle used is described. The candles smoke as well as the audience. There is a large stock of amusement to be had in a one and a half cent concern, that is, if you are not particular about the æsthetic nature of the surroundings, and do not carry with you a cultivated musical ear. These places do not carry on their pay-roll any large number of star actors, or a numerous stock company, and they do not devote much time to the rehearsal of parts, as it is the duty of the prompter to flit from one actor to another with the lines of the dialogue in one hand, and in the other a stiff paper lantern. Bending low, he reads in a tone readily caught

by the actor the lines, which are duly repeated, while the prompter "is doing his duty" by the next one. It is one of the most interesting features of a play, this constant flitting of the prompter. If any fellow about the establishment earns his pay, the prompter is the man.

There are very many side-shows to attract the pleasure-seeker, all of them being within the compass of the humblest, the charge being from one-half cent to one and one-half cents. In these places are witnessed juggling tricks of real merit, and top-spinning that is a bewilderment to the looker-on. Tops of all sizes are spun with the aid of a string, and made to revolve by the action of the hands only. An expert will throw his top from him, and by the action of the string as it unwinds draw it back so that it is caught in his hand — of course, without it having touched the ground. An unopened fan is then taken in the other hand, and the top is placed upon one of its sides and spun along it. Then the fan is opened, and the top continues to spin along its edge to its farther side, and along it until the hand is reached, when up it runs on the arm to the shoulder, and across the back and down the other arm, on to the fan again. Then it will be tossed into the air and caught upon one of the corners of the opened fan, from which it is tossed again and again into the air and caught as it descends. It is wonderful the way they can manipulate a top. I have seen them take a large-sized one, having a spindle by which it was made to rotate, and by simply placing the spindle between the palms of the hands, and drawing one hand back while advancing the other a number of times it attained sufficient velocity, when it was taken from the table on which it was spinning and a turn taken around the spindle with a string that was pendant from

a paper lantern hanging high up against the ceiling of the building. Up went the top into the lantern, which opened into the shape of an umbrella, and a wealth of festoons of bright-colored tissue paper descended from

CHINESE PROPERTY-ROOM.

it all about the stage. Those who witnessed Little All Right and the troupe of Japanese acrobats that exhibited their tricks years ago in the United States will remember the many surprising feats done by them.

What they paid $1 for seeing can be witnessed in Yokohama in the open air for just what one is pleased to contribute, or under cover for from one to three cents.

MINNIE MADDERN.

There are no manifestations of applause, no cat-calls or signs of impatience. In the places visited by even the poorest, where the accommodations are of the rudest, perfect order is observed, and every one seems to be possessed of a patient quietness that is amazing. They exhibit a deference for the comfort of their fellows that is worthy of imitation. One great reason, perhaps, that the people are so gentle and accommodating, one to the other, may be found in their complete sobriety. No exhibition of drunken rowdyism is to be seen, and yet the entire people, women as well as men, drink of the national beverage, "sake," a liquor distilled from rice. As there is no "tarantula juice" in its composition, its inebriating quality is rather mild. Its effect upon the brain is not lasting, neither is it injurious.

CHAPTER XXV.

OPERA AND OPERA SINGERS.

Ferdinand Palmo, who died in New York in September, 1869, as poor as the proverbial church mouse, was the father of Italian opera in this country. He was born in Naples in 1785 and came to America when twenty-five years old, settling in Richmond, Virginia. After remaining there six years he moved to New York, but not proving successful in a business venture returned to Virginia. After paying two visits to Europe he again tried New York and built a café, which he run until 1835 when he opened a saloon chamber, which was afterwards converted by him into Palmo's Opera House, and in which Italian opera was for the first time presented to the American people on February 2, 1844. The opening opera was "Il Puritani," and during the season the best operas of the day were produced. The venture, however, did not prove a financial success. Palmo was reduced to poverty. With the assistance of friends he opened a small hotel, and after nine months became cook for a Broadway restaurant "where," says a writer, "he might often have been seen wearing his white apron and square cap and engaged in preparing the delectable dishes for which that establishment was noted." The death of his employer threw Palmo out of work and reduced him to straitened circumstances. As he was too old to do anything, members of the dramatic and musical professions met and organized a Palmo

Fund, each person in the organization agreeing to pay $13 per year toward the old man's relief, and he lived comfortably on this fund until the day of his death. It is a curious fact that no musical or theatrical celebrities attended his funeral.

Forty years have effected a great change in the taste of the people of the United States. Italian opera now is one of the best paying things in the musical or dramatic market. Announce a season of grand opera in any city, and from that time on until the date of opening the manager of the theatre in which the season is to be held will be bothered by applicants for places. Double and treble the ordinary price of admission is asked, but that makes no difference; everybody seems desirous of patronizing Italian opera, and the extra price is paid without grumbling. These high prices of admission must be paid because it costs a vast amount of money to run Italian opera, transporting large companies long distances, paying immense salaries, and shouldering the enormous expenses of equipping an opera organization and mounting the pieces.

It is a great sight to see an opera company traveling. The principal singers must have their sleeping-cars and dining coaches, those beneath them put up with sleeping berths merely, while the members of the chorus are crowded like emigrants into an ordinary coach, from out which roll odors of fried garlic and Italian sausage. When their destination is reached the prima donne find carriages in waiting to drive them to the best hotel in the place. The secondary artists may also have carriages, but they go to minor hotels, while the chorus people are left to themselves to seek cheap boarding-houses and do the best they can. Wagon loads of trunks follow the carriages and wagon loads go to the theatre. Sometimes there is

scenery. For instance, Mapleson always carries the scenery for "Aida," even to big cities where there are first-class theatres. Hundreds of pieces of baggage are left at the hotels, and hundreds at the theatre. Immediately the troupe arrives the principal artists fall into the hands of the interviewer, and as the tenor and the prima donna and the others, too, are tired, the newspaper man gets very little to write about unless he runs across such a good fellow as Campanini, or happens to meet Charles Mapleson, if it is Her Majesty's Company.

Then on the following morning comes the rehearsal. The triumph is the usual sequel. All the young ladies are immediately "mashed" on the tenor, and would willingly follow the example of some New York beauties, who went as a committee of the whole behind the scenes one night to place a wreath of bay leaves on the head of their favorite warbler, only they have amateur tenors of their own by their sides who might not relish such a display of their appreciation of good music.

While her Majesty's Opera Company was having a season at the Academy of Music, New York, two years ago, a newspaper man interviewed Col. Mapleson, the impresario, and took a look at the interior of the establishment, exploring many of its mysteries. In the course of the conversation he asked: —

"How many rehearsals do you give a new opera?"

"Ah, now I can tell you something that the public know nothing of. A man of the crutch-and-toothpick school, after I've put on, let me say 'Aida' at a cost of $10,000, will come to me and say, 'Aw, I've seen "Aida" twice; when are you going to give us something new?' And the poor manager has to smile and mount something equivalent to it immediately. Re-

CROWNING A TENOR.

hearsals! *Par example.* This is the sixth full-band rehearsal for the orchestra alone — drilling for two and three hours — to get the light and shade of the

pianissimo and *forte*. After some more band rehearsals — the slight alterations in the score by Arditi kept four copyists at work all last night and until daybreak — the principal artists rehearse about twenty times with the piano; then comes a full rehearsal with band, the artists seated all around the stage on chairs; then the property-man has to have his rehearsal. The carpenters now come in for their rehearsals, with scene framers, etc. Then comes the first stage rehearsal, with everybody without the scenery, and then another with the scenery; later on again with the properties and the business, and *then* it is fit for public representation. Then a languid swell will tell me he has seen the opera twice, and will want to know when I am going to give something new."

An attendant here brought the colonel his letters, over which he hastily glanced.

"Here is a letter from the Prince of Wales," he exclaimed, showing me the note, dated Hotel Bristol, Paris, October 22d. "It's in reference to his omnibus box at Her Majesty's. While I am free for a moment from my den, just take a tour of this place. I'll act as guide, philosopher and friend. I'd like you to see what's going on, and to let the public know what a herculean task it is to run old operas, let alone producing new ones."

We strode across the stage and plunged into a cavernous passage, to emerge on a staircase and into a property-room.

"What dummy is this?" demanded the colonel, administering a kick to the decapitated form of a buxomly-proportioned female, "and where's the head?"

It is the "Rigoletto" corpse.

We took a peep into the armory, which, from its aroma of oil, painfully reminded me of my ocean ex-

perience. Here the "Talismano" helmets, Oriental of design; here the head-pieces worn in the "Puritani," reminding one of Cromwell's crop-eared knaves; here the Italian so well known in "Trovatore." Morions and breastplates and shields were here, and matchlocks of ancient pattern, with guns of the Martini-Henry design.

"Do you see these guns?" suddenly exclaimed the colonel. "I bought four hundred of them for five shillings a piece at an auction. They had been sold by an English firm to the French government during the Franco-Prussian war at a fabulous price. One night, at Dublin, we were doing 'Der Freischutz,' and poor Titjens was standing at the wing. One of these guns was loaded with a little powder rammed down by a piece of paper only. When fired, the lock blew off, and a piece of it went right through Titjens's dress, sticking in the wall behind her. What chance had the French with such weapons in their hands?"

From the armory we proceeded to the barber shop, where "Mignon," "Aida," "Traviata," and "Lucia" wigs, curls, moustaches and beards showed grizzly on shelves. A French barber was engaged in titifying Campanini's wig for "Linda," and he expatiated on its wonderful approach to nature with all the *chic* of his very expressive mother tongue.

In one of the wardrobes were the costumes for half a dozen operas, each opera folded away and labelled. Colonel Mapleson has about two thousand costumes with him, and his packing-cases, each the size of a small apartment, number nearly one hundred. We found the Nilsson Hall full of newly painted scenery, and the flies thronged with carpenters. The scene painter's room was devoted to "Aida," while the stage-man's room was choked full of flotsam and jet-

sam, from the lamp of a Vestal Virgin to the statuette

PATTI.

of Cupid *in puribus naturalibus*, and from a loaded pistol to a roleau of stage gold.

"The stage brass band is rehearsing in the lower

regions, the principal artistes doing 'Trovatore' in the first saloon, the chorus rehearsing 'Marta' in the second saloon, the orchestra on their own ground rehearsing 'Aida,' the ballet at work in a large room, and a set of coryphees blazing away in a distant corner. Listen!"

In the first saloon were the "Trovatore" party, lounging around a piano, presided at by Bisaccia, the accompanist to the company. Mlle. Adini, *neé* Chapman, the *Leonora*, was warbling right under the moustache of her husband, *Aramburo*, the tenor who was frantic because Mapleson refused £800 to release him from his engagement; while Del Puente was slapping his leg vigorously with his walking-cane, as he occasionally burst in with a superb note in harmony with the score. Madame Lablache leant with her elbows upon the bar, and knowing every square inch of a role she had performed from St. Petersburg to Gotham, turned from the perusal of a newspaper at the right moment in order to discharge the electricity of her *Azucena*, while her daughter, who is studying for the operatic stage, attended *en amateur*, a toy black-and-tan terrier in her arms. Having listened to a delicious *morceau* from "Il Trovatore," we ascended to saloon No. 2, from whence a Niagara of melody was grandly thundering. Here we found the chorus, numbering about eighty, seated hatted and bonneted, with Signor Rialp presiding at the pianoforte. The rehearsal was "Marta." After visiting a dozen different departments, every one of which is presided over by a vigilant chief, we again found ourselves on the stage.

"*Now*," exclaimed the colonel, "you have some little idea of what I have to look after, and yet when I produce a new opera, a crutch-and-toothpick fellow will coolly ask me, after seeing it twice, when I am

going to give something 'new.' Do you know that every one in that chorus you have just seen is an Italian, and selected after considerable trouble and

GERSTER.

great expense? Do you know what it costs me to operatically rig up each member of that chorus?

"I cannot tell."

"Well, it costs me $600, and it cost me $15,000 to bring the troupe across the Atlantic. Do you know what it costs me every time I ring up my curtain? Two thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars, and then add the weekly hotel bills, $2,200. I am doing opera at Her Majesty's at this moment. Here's the bill" — handing me the programme of Her Majesty's — "doing the same operas as here, and that in order to do them here, I am obliged to get a second set of *everything*, from a drinking-cup to a bootlace, and this costs me £120,000 before I started at all, as this is a distinct and separate undertaking."

"How many operas does your repertoire include?"

"Thirty. I have thirty with me, and I can play any one of them. Another element I have to deal with is the superstition, or whatever you like to call it, of some of my people. They won't go into any room in a hotel with the number thirteen, and an artist won't make his or her debut on the 13th; it is considered unlucky. I once recollect having engaged Mme. Grisi and Signor Mario for a tour in England, commencing the 13th of September. On sending them the programme, Mme. Grisi's attention was drawn to the 'thirteenth.' She thereupon wrote a very kind letter stating that nothing could induce her to appear on the 'thirteenth;' but to show there was nothing mean about her, she would rather commence it on the 'twelfth,' although her pay was to commence on the 'thirteenth.' I amended her programme and commenced on the 'twelfth,' but as that date happened to be a Friday it was again returned to me with a most amiable letter, which I still preserve, in which she stated again that there was nothing mean about the alteration, as she would be the only loser; she therefore desired me to commence it on the 'eleventh,'

when both she and Signor Mario would sing without salary until the proper date of the commencement of the contract. One of the artists went to Tiffany's the other day to purchase a bangle. The price was $13. 'Won't you take less?' 'No.' And would you believe it, she paid $14 sooner than pay $13."

We regained the managerial sanctum.

"Here is more of it," cried the impresario, "a letter from Campanini. I'll read it to you. 'Dear Mr. Mapleson: I am very ill, and cannot possibly sing to-night unless you send me — some tickets for family circle, balcony, parquette, and general circle. Campanini.'"

Here the colonel was summoned to hear a young lady sing — an amateur who aspired to the vocal majesty of grand opera. Upon his return, after the lapse of a few minutes, I asked: —

"What opera pays the best, colonel?"

"Oh, there are a dozen trumps."

"Is not 'Carmen' one of them?"

"Yes, 'Carmen' has been one of my best successes."

In conclusion, Colonel Mapleson said: —

"I am nervous as to the future, as nearly every coming artist has the misfortune to be American."

"Misfortune, colonel?"

"Yes. I use the word advisedly. Albani, Valleria, Adini, Van Zandt and Durand, one of the best dramatic prima donne on the stage, who, by the way, has gone to sing at the Grand Opera in Paris instead of coming here, and Emma Novada, a new prima — Candidus, the tenor, too; all the coming talent is American."

The salaries paid prima donne are very high. As far back as 1870, Mme. Patti was paid $50,000 a year,

besides being given numerous presents by the Emperor of Russia. Last winter Mr. Henry E. Abbey paid Mme. Patti at the rate of eight times the imperial salary, giving the diva $4,000 for each concert she sang in, and she sang two in each week. Albani was paid at the same rate as Patti in Russia. Nilsson, before her retirement, got $1,000 a night in the provinces. Now, that she is to return to the stage and come to America, she will be paid probably as handsomely as Patti was. Nearly all the foreign singers and artists have London agents through whom American impresarios carry on their negotiations. Gye is one of these agents and H. C. Jarrett, of London, who accompanied Bernhardt, as her agent, and who represents Nilsson, is another.

Singers and dramatic people, too, are fond of diamonds. They have thousands of dollars' worth of them; still they believe in investing in them because they represent so much value in such little space. Sara Bernhardt had a wonderful wealth of these precious stones, and Neilson was well provided with them. B. Spyer, the St. Louis diamond merchant, with whom theatrical and operatic people deal almost exclusively, and who enjoys the patronage of nearly all foreign artists who visit this country, told me a very funny story about the first diamond he sold Christine Nilsson. He had a splendid stone worth $4,000, and taking it with him he went up to the Lindell Hotel, and knocking at Nilsson's door was told to come in. He opened the door and there on a sofa the great songstress was reclining covered with an old calico gown. He showed her the stone, but she did not want to buy it and would not. Nilsson having left the room for a while, Mr. Spyer approached the dressing-maid, who was an old lady, and showing her a handsome diamond ring told her he would give it to her if she used her

influence to induce her mistress to buy the $4,000 diamond. She said she would, and while they were talking in walked a gray-haired old gentleman in common clothes who looked like a servant, and whom Mr. Spyer engaged in conversation. He told the old man of his scheme with the dressing-maid, when the latter said, "Tut, tut, she can do nothing for you; she's got no influence."

"Then can you do anything?" Mr. Spyer asked. "I'll make it all right if you help me to sell the Madame that stone."

"Well," said the old gentleman, "I want a pair of ear-rings for my daughters, who are in England."

"All right" was the diamond broker's answer; "you use your influence and if I make the sale you shall have the ear-rings."

The old gentleman said he would do what he could. Mr. Spyer sold the diamond to Nilsson and in a few days the old gentleman walked into his store and after looking over the stock selected a $650 pair of ear-rings. Spyer was surprised, but his surprise was greater when he learned that the person he had taken for a servant was none other than H. C. Jarrett, then and now Nilsson's confidential agent.

Mr. Spyer told me another story which I may as well bring in here, of how he sold a ring to Adelaide Neilson for $3,000. Mr. Lee, who was then Neilson's husband, was conducting the negotiations, and told Mr. Spyer that he was going to buy some property in Chicago, and would receive a telegram in regard to it, to know whether his offer for the property had been accepted or rejected. If he did not receive a telegram by twelve o'clock noon the following day, he would buy the ring. At noon next day Mr. Spyer was at the Southern Hotel, where Mr. Lee and his wife were

stopping. He asked the clerk if he had seen Mr. Lee around the rotunda, and the clerk answered no, that he himself was looking for Mr. Lee, as he had a telegram for him.

"Well now, I'll tell you what to do — " mentioning his first name, for the diamond merchant knew the clerk, "you'll oblige me very much and do me a great favor if you'll keep that telegram down here until I go up stairs and see Lee."

The clerk agreed; Mr. Spyer went up stairs and sold his diamond ring. Himself and Mr. Lee walked down the stairs to get a drink. The clerk called Mr. Lee, handed him the telegram and he opened and read it.

"By Jove, Barney," he said, holding out the telegram, "if I'd gotten this ten minutes sooner I wouldn't have bought that ring."

"Well, I'm glad you didn't get it," Mr. Spyer responded. "Let's go and have some Apollinarius."

One morning during that same week Mr. Spyer was sitting in the store when Neilson came in alone and bought a diamond ring for $175, paid for it and told the merchant to say nothing to Philip about it. There was nothing so very extraordinary in this; but when Mr. Lee came in an hour afterwards and picked out a ring about the same value and paying for it enjoined Mr. Spyer to say nothing to Adelaide about it, he was surprised at the remarkableness of the coincidence. He never heard anything more about either of the rings.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MINSTREL BOYS.

The idea of negro minstrelsy in its present shape originated forty years ago with Dan Emmett, Frank Brower, Billy Whitlock and Dick Pelham. This happy quartette organized the Virginia Serenaders in 1841, giving their first performance on December 30th. An idea of the "first part" furnished by that combination was given last season, when Dan Emmett himself appeared with three others in an act in which the old jaw-bone figured, and the other instruments were banjo, tambourine and fiddle. Fifty years before the time of the Virginia Serenaders a Mr. Grawpner is said to have blacked up at the old Federal Street Theatre, in Boston, where he sang an Ethiopian song in character. The first of the negro melodies that have been preserved is "Back Side of Albany Stands Lake Champlain." It was sung by Pot-Pie Herbert, a Western actor who flourished long before the days of "Jim Crow," Rice, or Daddy Rice, as they called him. Herbert's song was as follows: —

Back side Albany stan' Lake Champlain,
Little pond half full o' water;
Platteburg dar too, close 'pon de main,
Town small, he grow bigger berearter.

On Lake Champlain Uncle Sam set he boat
An' Massa McDonough he sail 'em;
While General Macomb make Platteburg he home
Wid de army whose courage nebber fail 'em.

Daddy Rice was employed in Ludlow & Smith's Southern theatre as property-man, lamp-lighter, stage carpenter, etc., and he made no reputation until he began jumping Jim Crow, in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1829, after which he became famous and made a fortune by singing his song in this country and England. The original "Jim Crow," with the walk and dress, were copied from an old Louisville negro, and ran along regardless of rhythm in this manner: —

I went down to creek, I went down a fishing,
I axed the old miller to gim me chaw tobacker
To treat old Aunt Hanner.

CHORUS. First on de heel tap, den on de toe,
Ebery time I wheel about I jump Jim Crow.

I goes down to de branch to pester old miller,
I wants a little light wood;
I belongs to Capt. Hawkins and don't care a d—n.

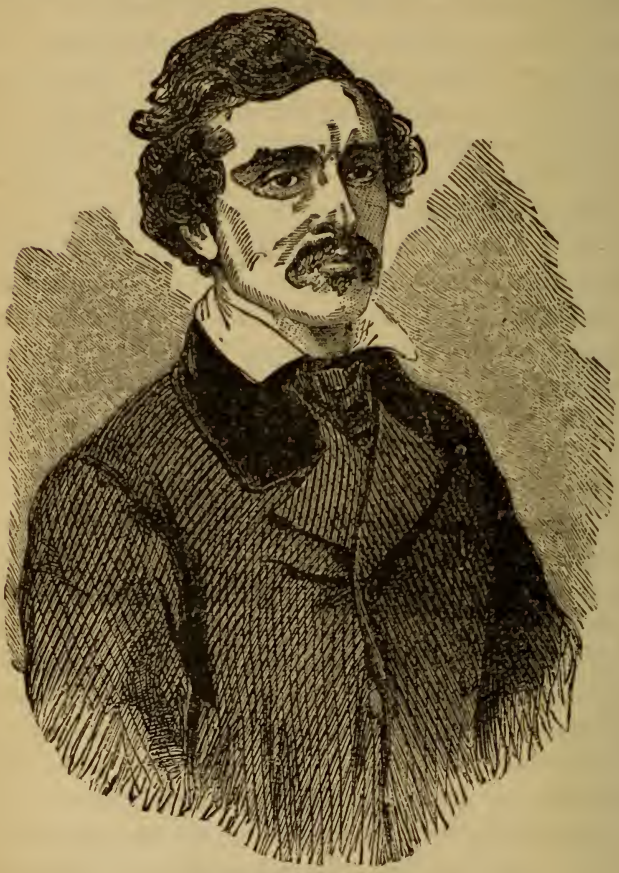
CHORUS. First on de heel tap, etc.

George Nichols, a circus clown, claims to have been the first negro minstrel, and some award this distinction to George Washington Dixon, who disputes the authorship of "Zip Coon" with Nichols, who first sang "Clare De Kitchen," which he arranged from hearing it sung by negroes on the Mississippi. Bill Keller, a low comedian, was the original "Coal Black Rose," in 1830, John Clements having composed the music. Barney Burns, a job actor and low comedian, first sang "My Long Tail Blue," and "Such a Getting up Stairs," written and composed by Joe Blackburn. These were all about Daddy Rice's time, and nearly all the songs of the day were constructed in the style of "Jim Crow." They were taken from hearing the Southern darkies singing in the evenings on their plantations.

In the year following the organization of the Virginia Serenaders the original Christy Minstrels were organized by E. P. Christy, in Buffalo. The troupe consisted of E. P. Christy, Geo. Christy (whose real name was Harrington), L. Durand and T. Vaughn. They first called themselves the Virginia Minstrels, but changed to Christy Minstrels in a short time, when Enon Dickerson and Zeke Bakers joined them. The party continued to give concerts up to July, 1850, when E. P. Christy died and was buried in Greenwood, George Christy had withdrawn in October, 1853, owing to some dispute between himself and E. P. His salary during the two years and six months preceding the withdrawal amounted to $19,680. The troupe gave two thousand seven hundred and ninety-two concerts during its existence, took in $317,-589.30, paid out $156,715.70, and had a profit left of $160,873.60. The profits of the first year did not exceed $300. Companies were now springing up everywhere, and so great was the rage for ministrelsy that the troupes were obliged to give morning concerts. The entertainment has been one of our public amusements ever since, and a good company of burnt cork artists can command a good house anywhere. Following the spirit of enterprise of the age and the tendency to gigantic proportions in everything, minstrelsy has developed into Mastodon Megatherion and other mammoth organizations. End men by the dozens, song and dance men by the scores and no less than forty ("count 'em") artists now amuse the public that was satisfied with four in '41. By the way it was in this year on July 4th, that bones were first played before an audience, the player being Frank Brower of the Virginia Serenaders.

George Christy, who was the most celebrated Ethio-

pian performer the world knew in those days was born in Palmyra, State of New York, November 3, 1827. He was sent to school at an early age, and although he excelled in all the branches of education



GEORGE CHRISTY.

peculiar to boys of his age, after school hours the master often found him at the head of a party of boys whom he had assembled together for the purpose of giving theatrical entertainments, or, as they called it,

a *show*. George was, as he ever has been, the very head and front of this species of amusement; and subsequently, under the auspices of E. P. Christy, made his debut as Julius, the bone-player, in the spring of 1839, and afterwards attained to the very first rank in his profession. He survived his namesake many years.

The only fault to be found with the minstrelsy of the present day is the coarseness that pervades many of the sketches and crops out in the songs and funny sayings. The old-time negro character has been sunk out of sight and the vulgarity of the gamin has taken the place of the innocent comicalities that were in vogue forty years ago. It is true that the negro character has undergone a change and that the black man now vies with his white brother in everything that is low and vicious; but the criticism still holds good that negro minstrelsy is not what it was or what it ought to be, and that no matter how grand its proportions may be made by enterprising managers the many features that make it objectionable to fastidious people must be pruned off before it can be said to be deserving that full recognition which the public always accords to whatever is good in the amusement line.

The negro minstrel is an institution entirely outside of the pale of commonplace people. He talks differently from other people, acts differently, dresses differently. A "gang of nigger singers" can be identified three blocks away by an ordinary observer of human nature. They have a fondness for high and shining silk hats that are reflected in the glaze of their patent-leather, low-quarter shoes every time they pull up their light trousers to look at their red or clocked silk stockings. Their clothes are of a minstrelsy cut, and like the party who came to town with rings on her

fingers and rings on her toes, they must have their fingers covered with amethysts or cluster-diamond ornaments, and they rarely ever fail to display a "spark" in their gorgeous shirt fronts. They are "mashers" of the most pronounced type on the stage and off, and just as soon as they take possession of a small town, it is safe to say that all the feminine hearts lying around loose will be corraled within twenty-four hours of their arrival. They are as generous now as they were years ago, and few of them save a cent for the frequently mentioned rainy day. The very best of them have died in poverty, and found graves only through the charity of friends. Johnny Diamond and his partner, Jim Sanford, the former of whom helped Barnum in his first steps along the road to fortune, both died in the same Philadelphia almshouse. They had commanded big salaries, but dressed flashily and lived fast, and when the rainy day came they had to run for shelter to a public charity. Very few performers who die in poverty now are allowed to seek any other than the charity of their professional brethren. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks takes care of the unfortunates, assisting them generously while living and giving them decent burial at their death.

As I said, the minstel boy is an irresistible "masher." His particular weakness is women, with wine often only a little behind. He lives at as rapid a rate as his salary will allow, and turns night into day by "taking in the town" after the performance. They frequently get into scandalous history owing to the promiscuousness with which they pick up with petticoats, and their amours get them into great trouble. Women seem to have a lavish fondness for the end-man, and many of them have left husband,

children, and home to follow the fortunes of a fickle minstrel. The story of the Chicago gambler's wife who ran off with Billy Arlington is still fresh in the minds of the people of the city by the lake, and still

"YOU ARE THE SORT OF A MAN I LIKE."

fresher is that of the St. Louis *demi-mondaine* who sold out her house to be always near her "Johnny," who, I think, was one of the Big Four.

A mash that created a sensation, though, was one

that developed in a New York Bowery theatre, one night, when a young woman elegantly attired jumped out of a private box, and embracing a performer who was just finishing a banjo solo, shouted in a voice that was clear and loud, "You're the sort of a man I like!" The audience cheered lustily and the young woman accepted the applause with a courtesy, while the banjoist staggered into the wings, too much amazed to be flattered. A young man from whose side the lady had made her leap upon the stage, succeeded with some difficulty in coaxing her back into the box and the show went on. The pair had been dining and wining together, and the young gentleman had not been as attentive to his companion as she thought proper. So she had chosen the original method of at once rebuking and shaming him. She succeeded. He did not dare to look at another woman on or off the stage again until the curtain fell.

Those who have never witnessed the rehearsal of a minstrel company can have but a very faint idea of the amount of worry and vexation to which the manager is subjected before he becomes satisfied that the company has mastered the work so that it is in a condition to present to the public. The scene at a dramatic rehearsal is the scene of perfect peace and harmony compared with that of a minstrel company. The difference is caused by the fact that dramatic performers study their lines and business carefully, and have the idea constantly before them that they must adhere to the text and the author's ideas closely, while minstrels, or "nigger singers" as they are called by members of the profession, work with only one end in view, and that is, to be funny. A minstrel having a speech of a dozen lines will make it twenty-five times and never make it twice alike. Every time he speaks it he will drop

out something or insert something which the author did not intend to be there. The result is that a manager superintending a rehearsal is in hot water, figuratively, all the time. If he storms and swears at the performers, he only makes matters worse, and, therefore while he is inwardly boiling with vexation he must retain a calm exterior and appear as smiling as a June morning. There have been well authenticated cases where minstrel managers have been driven to strong drink by the intense strain upon their mental faculties occasioned by superintending rehearsals. These cases, however, are rare.

Through the courtesy of Manager J. A. Gulick, I had the pleasure, last spring, of witnessing a rehearsal of Haverly's Mastodon Minstrels. I took a seat under the shadow of the balcony to watch developments, and passed ten or fifteen minutes in inspecting the dull, dismal aspect of the house. Everything was quiet and oppressively sombre. Occasionally a scrub woman who was working a broom in the dress circle would bark one of her shins against one of the iron chair-frames and sit down and howl in a subdued tone, but beyond this there was nothing to break the stillness until the members of the company began to arrive. Presently the orchestra came in and began to tune up their instruments to a condition proper for the promulgation of sweet strains, and then the comedians and singers came sauntering in on the stage. Apparently, the first duty of each and every one of them upon getting out of the wings, was to execute a shuffle, cock his hat over his left eye and swagger off up the stage with a satisfied smile. Each having been successfully delivered of his matutinal shuffle, and having satisfied himself that he hadn't contracted the "string-halt" during the night, all seated themselves and awaited the

appearance of the manager. Divested of their burnt cork and stage toggery, the company looked more like a collection of well-to-do young men in the commercial walks of life than minstrel performers. All looked as if they had passed a comfortable night, and had not indulged in those revels which are erroneously supposed to be inseparable from the life of a minstrel. Consequently I was bound to conclude that they had said their prayers at 11 : 30, and at midnight were snoring the snores of the innocent and blessed. The only member of the company who looked as if he might have gone wrong on the previous night was Frank Cushman. His right eye was bloodshot, and he had a protuberance on his forehead over the optic such as might be raised by the kick of a mule. His condition was afterward explained by the fact that in attempting to make a "funny fall" in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," on the night previous, he had made a miscue and had received a genuine fall, striking on his head. Suspicion was therefore allayed, and I became satisfied that Cushman, too, had said his prayers and had gone regularly to bed unloaded.

Promptly at eleven o'clock, the hour set for rehearsal, Manager Gulick arrived and proceeded at once to business by delivering an address to the orchestra leader : —

"Now we don't want any break in this first part finish to-night. You want to make that first chorus very forte and then work it off gradually very piano. Then when they all come on you want a short wait and then a crash — see?"

The leader nodded to indicate that he saw.

"Then," resumed Mr. Gulick, "when you hear the pistol fired, work in that te um iddle de te um ah tiddle um tiddle tah — see?"

The leader again saw, and the manager continued:

"Then when you come to 'The girl I left behind me,' put in la la tum liddle la la tum liddle ah — see?"

But without waiting to see whether the leader saw or not the manager turned to the company with: "Now, boys, get down to business and we'll rehearse that first part finish."

Then there was a rush of the "40-count 'em" down to the foot-lights, and everybody began to talk. Each man struck a different subject and a different key apparently, and the finish appeared to be so thoroughly jumbled up that it seemed an impossible task to straighten it out again. But the performance appeared to be an adjunct of the rehearsal, for when it was finished Mr. Gulick took his seat at the foot-lights, while the company arranged itself in the usual semi-circle, with E. M. Kayne, the interlocutor, in the centre. More instructions were given by the manager, when a young man rushed in and performed the pantomime of handing Mr. Kayne a telegram, which the latter pantomimically opened and calmly announced that he had just received news that he had just won the prize of $50,000 in the Kentucky State lottery. He didn't make as much fuss over it as any other man would over finding a half-dollar on the street. The news must have pleased him, for he remarked: —

"Boys, I'm in luck."

"What is it?" said Billy Rice.

"Fifty thousand dollar prize," replied Mr. Kayne.

"What did I tell you?" said Rice.

"Take us out and treat us," said Cushman

"Didn't I tell you I was a Mascot," said another. They all called for lemonade, and Mr. Kayne compromised the matter by agreeing to take them all to Europe on a pleasure trip if they would pack their trunks in

five minutes. A chorus was then sung and the trunks were announced packed. Jimmy Fox then came forward and announced that he was captain of the Pinafore. The other members of the company must

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have been looking for him, for they shot him dead with a vociferous "bang!" and then proceeded to sing "Glory Hallelujah," over his corpse. This brought him to life again and he was readmitted to the excur-

sion party. One of the vocalists then sang "Old Folks at Home," and at its conclusion Mr. Kayne asked if there was no one else to whom they wished to say "good-by," but all responded, "No, not one."

"Yes, there is," said Mr. Kayne, and the orchestra opened with "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

The rehearsal was interspersed with very sweet little melodies, which redeemed such verses as this:

Our trunks are packed and our passage is paid,
Sail o'er the ocean blue;
Of the briny wave we're not afraid,
Sail o'er the ocean blue.

Then Cushman sang: —

Oh, fare you well, St. Louis girls,
Fare you well for awhile;
We'll sail away in the month of May
And come back in July.

Rice retaliated with: —

Fare you well, you dandy coons,
We'll show you something grand;
We'll sail away o'er the ocean blue,
Till we reach the promised land.

There was nothing strikingly classical about the words, but the melody was charming, and covered them with a charitable cloak.

The first part finish having been rehearsed, Manager Gulick discovered some flaws in it and ordered it to be done over again. On hearing this the man at the bass viol looked up piteously at Billy Rice and asked: —

"Are we going through it again?"

"Of course," replied Rice; "do you want to rest all the time?"

This question was not answered and the bass viol dropped into a seat apparently completely discouraged.

The piece was rehearsed, not once only, but half a dozen times, and when it was pronounced all right the bass viol gave a sigh of relief that shook the building.

Several songs were then rehearsed, during which everybody was busy. At one side of the stage the quartette was singing, Cushman was practising an end song, the orchestra was at work on an overture, three or four men were brushing up on a farce, two song-and-dance men were inventing new steps, and Charley Dockstader was reading the *Clipper*. It was an exceedingly lively scene, and there was noise enough to wake the dead. Vocal and instrumental music fought a pitched battle, while the dancers hammered the stage with their feet as if by way of applause. A boiler-shop is a haven of rest beside a minstrel rehearsal at this stage.

The rehearsal lasted nearly two hours without a rest, and was as utterly unlike a minstrel performance as can well be imagined. There was nothing particularly amusing in it except its oddity, and yet when it was presented with black faces and varied costumes it caused roar upon roar of the heartiest laughter, because those who saw it then had not seen how the performance was constructed.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PANTOMIME.

There are two kinds of clowns familiar to people who patronize amusements — the clown who juggles old jokes in the circus ring, and the clown whose only language is that of facial expression, and whose grins and grimaces together with his extraordinary antics and white face are more acceptable to and interpretable by childhood than the ancient and petrified humorisms of his brother laugh-maker of the sawdust circle. There is no circus clown in the world could stretch the heart-strings of an audience as far and hold them there longer than George L. Fox, the king of pantomimic merry-makers. His was a face readable as the pages of a book printed in good large type, and the wonderful swift changes that came over it were like fleecy clouds and sunshine chasing each other across a summer sky. Poor Fox, who sent a thrill of joy into the hearts of thousands of little folks and caused their rosy lips to over-bubble with silvery laughter, his was a hard, an undeserved fate — death in a madhouse, without a glint of reason to light him on his journey across the dark river. He has left no successor more worthy of his place than George H. Adams, whose talent obtained him the recognition of Adam Forepaugh, the showman, with whom he is now in partnership. Frazier and clowns of minor merit fill the rest of the places, but Adams is at the top of the heap, and may be fitly termed the Grimaldi of to-day.

GEORGE H. ADAMS IN HUMPTY DUMPTY.

It is pleasant to visit a theatre during the progress of a pantomime. The house is filled with old and young in equal proportions, or if there is any preponderence it is on the side of the little folks, who clamber up on the backs of chairs and laugh freely and sweetly as the birds in the forest sing, every time they catch sight of the chalked head of the clown and the gray tuft standing like a turret above poor old Pantaloon's wig. And the old people laugh all the heartier because the innocent young people have their hearts and mouths filled with joy. The pantomime may be "Humpty Dumpty" or "The Magic Flute" or "The Merry Miller"—call it by whatever name you will, an intense interest is taken in it, and new enjoyment is found in every performance. The tricks are the same, the mechanical effects identical with those of every other pantomime you may have seen, and even the specialty sketches that divide the acts of the dumb show seem to be of very close kindred with those of former attractions of this kind. Still everybody enjoys the fun just as many people laugh at the "chestnuts"—*vulgariter*, old jokes—of the man in motley attire, who tries to make the patrons of the circus feel happy.

It makes no difference to the miniature men and women who are Humpty Dumpty's best friends and admirers, how the mechanical effects of a pantomime are produced. They do not care much to know that the pig Humpty Dumpty and Pantaloon stretch across the width of the stage in an endeavor to tear it from each other, has a rubber body; that the bricks the clown throws at everybody are only paper boxes; that the trick pump is worked from the side scenes with a string; that the clothes which suddenly, and as if by some invisible influence, vanish into the sides of houses or up through windows have light but strong black

thread, which the little ones cannot see at a distance, attached to them; the big policeman is to them a stern and gigantic reality; and it affords them more fun to imagine every time Humpty throws or makes a blow at anybody, that the stinging sound is a sure indication that his aim was well taken — they do not know that the sound as of receiving a blow is the result of slapping the hands together. All the simple illusions of the scene and of the action are to them actual facts, and they appear all the more ridiculous and are all the more effective on this account. When Humpty Dumpty dives through the side of a house, disappearing behind, there are men in waiting to catch him, and when he sits down to read his newspaper and the candle begins to grow beyond his reach, then falling as he attempts to go higher with a sudden bang, and the clown comes tumbling down after it as Jill did after Jack when they went up the hill for the bucket of beer, few of the big or little people know that the candle runs down through one of the legs of the table and is all wood except the waxen bit at the top. All these little mysteries have their charms for the years of childhood, and in no country are the pleasures of the pantomime so fully recognized as in England, where on Boxing Night — the 26th of December — children crowd the theatres to witness the Christmas pantomime. In some theatres here the custom of providing pantomime for the Christmas holidays is adhered to, but as there are not enough Grimaldis or Foxes or Adamses or Fraziers to go around, the supply being very limited, we cannot compete with England in this respect.

As Adams is the only pantomimist who can lay any claim to the mantle of George L. Fox — if clowns can be said to have mantles — a short biography may not be out of place. He is twenty-eight years old, is a native

of England, and is the eldest son of Charles H. Adams, one of the best Pantaloons in the country. He comes from a family of circus people, being a descendant of the famous Cookes, riders and clowns, and is a cousin of W. W. Cole, the circus manager. He was apprenticed to the manager of Astley's, in London, when he was six years of age, and remained there eight years. After appearing as clown with a circus in Denmark, he came to America, and for several years travelled with different circuses. His first appearance as clown in the pantomime was in Brooklyn, New York, in 1872, under the management of Tim Donnelly, who gave a pantomime every year during the Christmas holidays. His father was the stage manager for Donnelly, and suggested to George the idea of playing clown. George refused at first, but finally at his father's earnest solicitation decided to go on. He made an unmistakable hit, and from that time deserted the sawdust arena and adopted the stage. After several successful seasons with Nick Roberts and Tony Denier he last season accepted an offer of partnership with Adam Forepaugh to run a show under his own name.

In the last Christmas number of the London *Graphic* I found the following excellent article on "Boxing Night" as the little folks of London enjoy it: "The very first night of anticipated pleasure has come to nine-tenths of the little ones who gaze upon the scene in silent wonder and astonishment. Imagination in its wildest dreams never pictured anything so wonderful as this. There have been little theatricals at home, plays in the back drawing-room; some fairy tale has been enacted for which kind sisters have supplied the wardrobe, whilst mamma has presided over the piano orchestra. It was good fun to crawl across the mimic

stage in a hearth-rug, pretending to be a wolf or bear, and to hear the laughter of kind friends in front; but all that home amusement, the curiosity and contrivances, the songs and dances were, indeed, child's play when compared to a real theatre on Boxing Night. What importance is given to the child by being considered old enough to sit up so late as this; what a sense of mystery and wonderment to be driven through the lighted streets; to see the decorated shops set out with Christmas presents and New Year's gifts; and to behold for the first time, the bright electric light on the bridges and embankment! But this is far better than all, and only a very little removed from fairyland. How the myriad lights in the great chandeliers glisten and sparkle, and the stage foot-lights dazzle; how splendidly the orchestra seems to play; and hark! the boys in the gallery are taking up the tune, and singing together with wonderful swing and precision. One comic song and street tune follows another; the band suggests and the young musicians take it up with a will. Just now they had been a pelting of the pit with orange peel — all in good fun, of course. The lads in their shirt sleeves had whistled and screamed, and saluted friends in distant corners of the gallery; but now all this horse play is quieted by music and melody. It is Boxing Night, and there must be patriotism as well as pleasure. 'Rule Britannia,' 'God bless the Prince of Wales,' and 'God Save the Queen,' are sung from thousands of lusty throats, and all the audience rise to their feet, waving hats and handkerchiefs. Loyalty is as necessary as love at Christmas-time. And what has that good old wizard Blanchard prepared for the happy children? He must be as immortal as Father Christmas, and certainly is quite as popular. He will be the guide up the rocks of romance, and away to the fields of fairyland. He will lead his happy

followers amidst ogres and giants and elves and fays, to wizard castles and enchanted dells; now you will be at the bottom of the sea, where lovely queens wave sea-weed wands; and now on land amidst the yellow corn-fields and the bluebell lanes. There will be song and dance, and the madcap pranks of thousands of children, liliputian armies and glittering armor, poetry and processions, hobby-horses and the dear old Clown and Harlequin and Pantaloon supporting 'airy fairy' Columbine, if they would only ring that prompter's bell and pull up that tantalizing curtain. The noise is hushed, the music stops, the overture is over — but wait.

"What are they doing behind the curtain? There are beating hearts also in the manufactory of pleasure. Christmas-time means food and raiment to the great majority of those who are awaiting the prompter's signal. They have come from courts and alleys, from cold, comfortless rooms, from care and poverty, from watching and from want, to this great busy hive that uncharitable people abuse and ridicule. Times have been bad, the winter has advanced too soon, wages have been slack; but all will be mended now that Christmas has come again. Hearts beat lightly under the prince's tunics and the dancers' bodices, for every mickle makes a muckle, and there is work here, from the proud position of head of the Amazonian army to the humble individual who earns a shilling a night for throwing carrots in a crowd and returning slaps in a rally. And the training and discipline of the rehearsals up to this anxious moment have not been without their advantage. Punctuality, silence, order, and sobriety are the watchwords here. There have been no idling, dawdling, and philandering, as many silly people imagine. Even the little children have learned something, perhaps their letters, perhaps the art of

singing in unison, certainly the merit of being smart and useful. But now it is the great examination day. The lessons are over, and the result is soon to be known. What a wild fantastic scene it is — a very carnival of costumes. Fairies and hop-o'-my-thumbs, monkeys, and all the miscellaneous mixture of the menagerie, gorgeous knights in armor and spangled syrens, Titania and her train, pasteboard chariots, wands and crystal fountains, fruits and forest trees, mothers, dressers, carpenters, and costermongers for the crowd, all mixed up in apparent confusion, but in reality as well drilled and disciplined as an army prepared for action. All belong to some separate department or division; there is a leader for every squad, who is responsible for his men, and if anything goes wrong a prompt fine is a very wholesome punishment. It has been weary work during the last few rehearsals, and certain scenes have had to be repeated again and again. The testing of the scenery has delayed the action, and it has been late enough before these busy bees have got to bed. But the excitement of the moment gives new vitality. The night has come, and everyone is bound to do his or her best. Everything is smart and new, and the girls and children are proud of their costumes, in which they strut about admiringly. The stage manager has recovered his amiability, and calls everyone "my dear." A rapid, business-like glance is cast over the various scenes to see that everything is straight and ship-shape; the reports come up from the various departments to say there are no defaulters. The gas man is at his post, and the lime-light man at his station. The ballet master, with his flag in hand, is standing ready on his stool. Ready? Yes, sir! is the answer. Up go the foot-lights with a flare, a bell rings, the curtain rises, and the happy people before and behind the Christmas curtain meet."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VARIETY DIVES AND CONCERT SALOONS.

Outside of the legitimate theatres there is a large variety of places of amusement — that is, they are called places of amusement, but the fumes of vile tobacco, the odor of stale beer, the fiery breath of cheap whiskey, the sight of filthy women and filthier men, and the most excruciating and torturesome kind of music, all combine to make the resort anything but pleasant and the while the incidents that attract the visitor's attention are anything but amusing. There is, of course, no complaint of this sort to urge against the first-class variety theatres. These cater in a modest way to a low standard of intellect, but usually their programmes are chaste enough, and unless a person has an aversion to having beer spattered over his clothes by unhandy waiters while ministering to the thirsty wants of a neighbor in the same row, or objects to the attention of the gay girls who open wine in the private boxes and flirt with the people in the parquette, he will find a first-class variety show as pleasant a place as a good, long, mixed programme with the Glue Brothers in song and dance at one end, the Irish Triplets, in "select vocalisms and charming terpsichorean evolutions," in the middle, and a lugubrious sketch at the other end can make it. By some mysterious law known only to variety performers, the variety stage only about once in a century produces anything new or anything attractive. In the good old days of the bal-

let there was drawing power in the display of shapely limbs and the graceful music-of-motion like manner in which the girls tip-toed or pirouetted across the stage; or when the variety theatre was as much the home of

FENCING SCENE IN BLACK CROOK.

spectacle as the legitimate houses pretended to be, and on the Vaudeville stage scenes were presented that belonged to the same class of labyrinthine scenery and profuse female beauty that the "Black Crook"

and "The Green Huntsman" were the representatives of. When spectacles were the rage and the fencing scene in the "Black Crook" would set the boys at the top of the house wild with joy, the variety theatre had among the bright stars of its stage actors and actresses who are now among the most popular, and certainly among the heaviest money-makers, who appear in the legitimate houses.

Joe Emmett graduated from the variety theatre. Gus. Williams was a shining light on the same stage. J. C. Williamson was a variety artist. Geo. D. Knight did "Dutch business" in the minor theatres before he got to be famous as *Otto*. I recollect having seen Knight play *Rip Van Winkle* in Deagle's old variety theatre on Sixth Street, in St. Louis, and he played it well — not like Jefferson, of course, but it was his first attempt at the part, and if Jefferson did any better the first time he must not have improved very much since. This was twelve years ago. Mrs. Geo. Knight (Sophie Worrell) danced on a concert saloon stage in San Francisco. So did Lotta, and so did Mrs. Williamson. Den Thompson, whose *Joshua Whitcomb* is a perfect picture of the New England farmer, first tried this same character in the variety theatre, and Neil Burgess and the "Widow Bedotte" were first introduced to the public as the tail-end of a nigger-singing and specialty programme.

Those were the palmy days of the variety show before negro ministrelsy had grown to its present enormous proportions and before plays were written so as to take in a whole variety entertainment, and under the disguise of comedy or farce or burlesque foist a lot of specialty people from a first-class stage upon an intelligent audience. The musico-mirthful pieces that began to blossom forth in 1880 made a heavy

demand upon the resources of the variety houses, and within a year threaten to leave them entirely at the mercy of "ham-fats," as the lower order of this kind

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of talent is designated. "Fun on the Bristol" and fifty more flimsy patchworks of the same kind were sailing around the country in a short time, and every

"team" that had a specialty act of fifteen minutes duration wanted a play built to fit it and went around telling friends that they guessed they'd go starring next season. A great many of them did not go, but a great many others did. The worst were left behind, and the result was poor variety programms and in consequence poor patronage for them.

I picked up a programme the other day, belonging to what was once a first-class house, and is so still in all except the standard of the performance, and found such old and worn-out features as a lightning crayon artist and a lightning change artist, both of which are so threadbare that even a ten-cent theatre wouldn't care to give them stage room. It is an easy step from this kind of thing down to the dives. The latter, as an institution, flourishes wider and pays better than places of less savory notoriety. There is such a charm to vice that even the saintly do not hesitate to linger in its neighborhood a while, and take a sniff of its pungent atmosphere. Anybody who drops into Harry Hill's place in New York, any night in the week, will see some remarkably churchy looking gentlemen standing around studying the aspect of the establishment and dwelling with melting eyes upon some of the painted faces that look up from the beer tables ranged at one side of the hall. A correspondent who visited Harry Hill's very recently, gives the following description of the place, its proprietor and its frequenters: "Harry Hill's grows bigger as its notoriety extends with years, but it never changes. It is not a bar-room, not a concert saloon, not a pretty waiter-girl establishment, and not a free-and-easy. None of these terms describe it, for it is all those things in one and at once — big second-story room, containing a bar, a theatrical stage, which can quickly be made into a

prize ring, a bare space for dancing, tables, seats, a balcony, and a few so-called wine-rooms. There are always as many women as men in the place. The women are admitted by a private entrance, free. Men

GUS WILLIAMS AS JNO. MISHLER.

pass through a neglected bar-room on the ground floor at a cost of twenty-five cents. Prosperity has added a mansard roof and a clock-tower to the original structure, and Hill has taken in an adjoining building, and

turned its best apartments into billiard and pool-rooms and a shooting gallery. Let us go in through the bar-room, up a winding stair and suddenly into the glare and bustle and merriment of the so-called theatre. On the stage two women are exhibiting as pugilists, with boxing-gloves, high-necked short dresses, soft, fat, bare arms, and a futile effort to look very much in earnest, and as if they did not realize how apparent it was that their greatest effort was to avoid hurting one another's breasts or bruising one another's faces.

"In the chairs around the tables are many men, and an equal number of women. The men are mainly young, and a majority seem to be country youths or store clerks. There are others evidently country men or foreigners. The women wear street-dress, hats and all. They are Americans, often of Irish or German extraction. As a rule they are not pretty, but they are quiet and mannerly. They know the cast-iron rules of the house — no loud or profane talking, no loud laughing, no quarreling, "no loving." These are printed and hang on the walls, and all who go there either know or speedily find out that the slightest breach of them results in prompt expulsion from the house. All are drinking, and many of the women are smoking big cigars or tiny cigarettes. Other women, without hats or sacques, but wearing big white aprons, serve as waiters and as bartenders.

"Harry Hill himself, a smoth-faced old man, broad, big and muscular, who shares with Lester Wallack the secret of looking twenty years younger than he is, sits at a table with a detective and a chief of police from some suburb. Hill is always there, and is ever entertaining distinguished strangers. Clergymen from the cities drop in at the rate of one a night. The women, as they come and go, stop and salute or speak

with Hill. He knows them all, is kind to all, and is liked by all. He has nothing to do with them or their affairs, however, his place being merely their exchange, and their duty being merely to behave while there. The boxers bow and retire, and a young woman, who was a few minutes before at one of the tables with a broker, who was opening champagne, now faces the foot-lights in a short silk skirt, bare arms, bare head and red clogs. She sprinkles white sand on the boards from a gilt cornucopia, the music of a piano and three violins strike up, and she rattles her heels and toes through a clog dance. It is a waltz tune that she is keeping time to, and a tall young woman of extremely haughty mien and rich apparel seizes a shy and seedy little product of the pavement and whirls her round and round in the bare space on the floor. The lookers-on gather there, and a callow stripling from the country, without previous notice or formality, grasps a snubnosed, saucy-looking girl in the throng and joins the dancers.

"'Some of these girls 'as bin a-coming 'ere ten or fifteen years,' says Harry Hill, 'and looks better to-day than others which left their 'omes a 'alf year ago. Hit's hall hacordin' to 'ow they take to drink. Hif they go too farst they're sure to go too far.'

"Do they reform? Well, Mr. Hill says there are so many notions of what reform really is, that he can't say. Some of them reform and become mistresses when they get a chance, and some of them reform and return and reform again by spells. He points out one whom he calls Nellie, and says she went away and was going to lead a strictly honest life, disappeared for six months, and the other night came back again.

"I kept my eye on Nellie, and, needing no introduction, seized a chance to talk with her.

"'I got married, and was as straight as a string for six months,' said she; 'but I had misfortune, and had no other way to support myself but to come back here.'

"'Husband leave you?'

"'He got caught cracking a dry goods store, and is up for two years.'"

The patrons of the variety "dives" are usually young men, clerks, salesmen, and sometimes the trusted employee of a bank or broker's office will get "mashed" upon one of the almost naked women who appear upon the stage, and will thereafter be numbered among the patrons of the resort. Those who have gone into the private boxes once and find the girls obliging enough to sit on their knees and ask them to treat will go there again if they can possibly get the fifty cents that is asked as an admission fee.

Sometimes a party of really Christian men unfamiliar with city ways will get into a variety dive by mistake, and what is more, into the boxes. The glaring sign over the front of the house which simply announces that the place is a theatre attracts them to the box-office.

"Say, Mister, what do you tax us to go in?" one of the party asks.

"Tickets are twenty-five, thirty-five and fifty cents," answers the dapper little man in the box-office who looks as if he ought to be a bar-keeper or a barber.

"Give us five of your half-a-dollar chairs," says the spokesman, throwing down his money, and they are forthwith led to seats in the private boxes, which are no more than long galleries walled in and having two or three windows to which the occupants crowd when

anything interesting is going forward on the stage. As I have already said these boxes are connected by doors with the stage and the serio-comic vocalist who has a few minutes to spare will loiter in to strike somebody for a drink.

"Say, baby, can't I have a wet?" one of the female wrestlers remarks as she plumps herself down in her tights on the quivering knee of a weak little fellow who appears young enough to be fond of molasses candy yet, and throws her arms around his neck and hugs him to her flabby breast violently enough to disarrange the black curly hair he had slicked down at the barber shop just before he came in.

"A what?" he asks, trying to get his neck sufficiently released to be at least comfortable.

"A drink, darling," and she hugs him again and begins playing with a little curl over his forehead.

"Why, of course you can," is the overwhelmed young man's reply.

Now she looks fondly into his eyes and with the most affectionate expression at her command asks: "And how about my partner, baby. Can't she have a drink?"

"I suppose so," responds the victim; and there is a loud shouting at the stage-door for "Ida," or somebody else, and Ida, knowing what she is wanted for, hurries to the spot. In the meantime "Johnnie," the waiter, has been summoned.

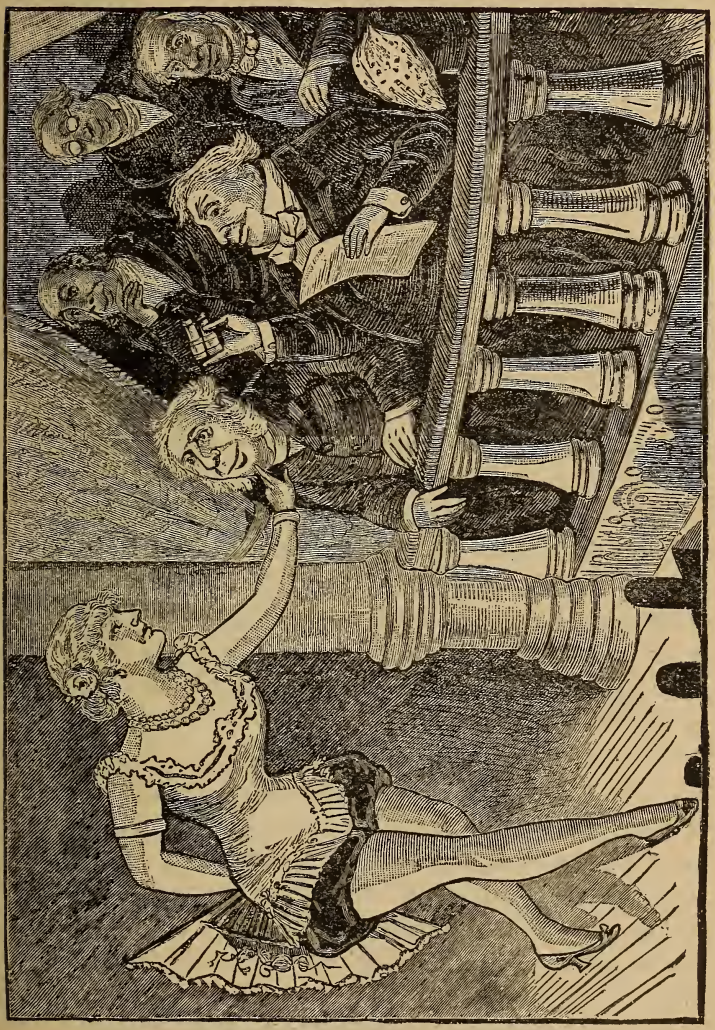
"Give me a port wine sangaree," says Ida's partner.

"And give me a stone fence" (cider and brandy), says Ida.

"And what are you going to drink, baby?" the wrestler sitting on his knee asks.

"Give me glass of beer," says the "baby," in a tone

sufficiently disconsolate to suggest that he was afraid he might not have enough money to pay for the treat.



"SHE TICKLED HIM UNDER THE CHIN."

One night a party of saintly looking grangers from Indiana, — five of them, — who appeared as if they were

a delegation to some sort of a religious convention, got into a Bowery dive by some mistake, but made no mistake in remaining there. They got in early and it was late when they left. The whole thing appeared novel, startling to them. They had never before seen so much unstripped womanhood exposed to the naked eye. They hired a cheap opera-glass from the peanut boy, and they bought "pop" the whole night long. During the first part, when all the girls and the "nigger" end-men sit in a circle and sing dismal songs and deal out smutty jokes, the grangers were in a perfect ecstacy of wonder and admiration for the shortness of the women's dresses and the symmetry of their padded limbs; but when the first part was over and a serio-comic singer came tripping out upon the stage without any dress at all on — nothing but a bodice, trunks and flesh-colored tights — and sang "Tickled Him Under the Chin," they were in a frenzy and did not know what to do with their hands, or how to sit still, because the singer kept throwing glances in the direction of their box. Then came the supreme exaltation of their feelings; the serio-comic danced over to the box as she sang, and actually tickled the most clerical member of the quintette on his fat, white chin, while the four others looked on in astonishment, and the audience fairly howled.

The grangers were "guyed" pitilessly by the audience, but they paid little, if any, attention to it. As soon as the serio-comic had done her "turn" she rushed for their box, and before long the five Hoosiers were as happy as the lark when it trills its song to the morning.

The "dive" audiences are mixed in their character, as has been already suggested, and the proximity of a well-dressed young man to a crowd of hoodlums in

jeans pants and braided coats often precipitates a row. Scarcely a night passes in the flash variety shows that there is not some trouble. A "bouncer" is connected with each establishment, whose business it should be to quell disturbances, but who, like hot-headed Irish policemen, do more towards increasing the dimensions of a row than forty other men could do. It is bad policy to attempt open criticism of the performers or performance in one of these dens. A hiss will attract the attention of the bouncer, who will come down to the sibilant offender and say: —

"Young man, do ye expect us to give ye Sary Burnhart an' Fannie Divenpoort and Ed'in Booth fur twinty-five sints. Af ye don't loike the show lave it, but af ye open yer mug ag'in, or say so much as 'Boo,' I'll put ye fwhere ye'll have plinty toime to cool yersel' aff."

If the offender dares to argue the point the "bouncer" will catch him by the neck, and then a struggle ensues, canes are flourished, the audience rise to their feet, some of the girls run in fright from the stage, and there is pandemonium in the place for ten or fifteen minutes, by the end of which time the "bouncer" has taken his man out, and returning to business, triumphantly answers a question as to the whereabouts of the hisser: —

"Oh, I left him lyin' out there in the gutther where the collar 'll come along an' get 'im."

Occasionally there will be an incident of a more dangerous kind, but tinged slightly with romance. It is related that a cowboy went into a variety show in Marshal, Texas, one night and made quite a scene. His "mash" was a "chair sweater" in the show. Entering the place one night considerably under the

influence of brine, he called to his love in stentorian tones: —

"Mary, get your duds on and come with me."

"Sh-h-h!" said Mary.

ARMADO AND JAQUENETTA.

ARM.: — I love thee.
JAQ.: — So I heard you say.
Love's Labour Lost, Act I., Scene 2.

"Sh-h, nothing," was the lover's response. "You jest tog up quicker'n h—, or I'll douse these glims."

"I'll be through in an hour," urged Mary pacifically.

"This show'll be out sooner than that," was the cowboy's answer, as he pulled his barker and began shooting the tips off the side lights. He had just emptied his "weapin" and was about loading up again, when the frightened audience was reassured by the stage manager stepping on the stage and saying, "Mary, you are excused for the remainder of the evening. Go dress right away."

A "chair sweater," or "stuffer" as she is called out West, is a girl who sits in the first part, and who has nothing else to do than wear skirts short enough to display her limbs, and join in the choruses if she can do so without knocking the life out of the selection. After the first part she sits in the boxes and "works" the boys for drinks. If she can't make anything in the boxes she goes out into the audience — in the lowest of these dens — and flits from one place to another getting a drink here, and by that time "spotting" somebody over there whom she esteems worthy of "striking." She keeps this up all night, until the after-piece — the cancan, or whatever else it may be — is reached, when she goes behind the scenes and appears on the stage in the same street costume she has worn out in the audience. The "chair sweater's" lot is not a happy one. While pursuing her sudorific vocation she innocently imagines that she is making an actress out of herself, and I guess she is — a "dive" actress.

Now and then the "chair sweater" combines her own business with that of her employer by selling her own or other photographs to "grays." Some of these pictures are of the vilest kind, but they sell readily to the patrons of the "dive," and as the sale is effected

quietly, even an honest granger now and then buys one, "just to show 'em up around the grocery."

The variety "dive" usually closes its performance with a fiery and untamed cancan, all the people of the

LAURA DON.

company joining in the dance, the men usually in the character costumes and "make-up" in which they have appeared before in their sketches or acts.

Then follow the orgies behind the scenes. Some-

BENEDICK AND BEATRICE.

BEATRICE: — Talk with a man out of window? — a proper saying
BENEDICK: — Nay but Beatrice; —
Much Ado About Nothing, Act IV., Scene 1.

times it is a wine supper with champagne from the bar of the house flowing so freely that the undressed divinities do not hesitate to empty bottle after bottle over their heads as if they were Roman candles, thereby giving the assemblage a shower of Mumm's Extra

Dry; or perhaps they will shampoo the swelled head of one of the gentlemen.

In the wine-room, which is an adjunct of all these

houses, and which is a place that affords seclusion to those who want to be out of the way of meeting friends

THATCHER, PRIMROSE AND WEST.

or attracting the notice of strangers, many extraordinary exploits are to be witnessed. Plenty of drink,

however, is necessary to stimulate the fun, and when the girls get an old victim into their clutches they "play" him so nicely that he believes the whole lot

A "BOWERY" ON A "LARK."

of them are in love with him, and every few minutes comes the cry, "Let's have another bottle," and they

have it. They sit on his lap or play circus riding on his shoulders, and until the last bottle has come, and the victim has run dry of funds they keep him in good humor; then they show him the door, coldly say "Ta, ta! Baldy," and laugh heartily at his verdant innocence as he staggers away.

The man who allows any of these women — these cancan dancers or "chair sweaters" — to entice him to their home is lost. If he has money and they know it they will not take him to their home, but to some lodging-house with the proprietor of which the cancan dancer is acquainted, and whom she knows she can trust. A pitcher of beer and a bit of drugging for the victim's glass does the business. While she is stroking his beard and kissing the end of his nose the drug is flowing gently into the goblet of beer. They drink, and in a short time the soporific has its effect, and the slumbering man is relieved of his valuables and cash. He appeals to the police, and they promise to do something for him, but they don't. He sees the cancan dancer again the next night but she knows nothing about it. The proprietor of the lodging-house is dumb as an oyster. All the victim can do is to balance the account by putting experience on the debit side of the ledger and damphoolishness on the other.

In New York the Bowery is the great place for these dives. There are any number of them, and the Bowery actress who is brazen enough to smoke her cigarettes in the street, especially when she is "on a lark," may be distinguished by the boldness of her face and the almost masculine atmosphere that surrounds her. She seems to care for nobody and nothing except her small dog and the loafer who spends her money, and looks upon herself as the equal of the best woman in the profession.

The boy theatres which flourish in all large cities, and which are dirty, dingy miniature places with gallery and pit, and six by nine stages upon which the goriest of blood-curdling dramas are enacted, have a variety phase to them, specialty performers preceding the dramatic representations, and half-nude women

CONCERT SALOON BAND.

mingling and drinking with beardless youths in the boxes.

The concert saloon, as some of the low places that have a fat German with pink-spotted shirt and stovepipe hat playing the piano, while a chap that has the outward appearance of a speculative philosopher is blowing a cyclone through a cracked cornet, is called, has its attractions for many; and if there are ladies to

eke out the entertainment by squeezing discord out of an accordeon with flute obligato of an ear-piercing and peace-destroying kind — or, in fact, if there are any female musicians on the grounds, the proprietor of the establishment may count on liberal patronage. The female orchestras to be found in the Bowery, New York, where a squad of pretty girls all dressed in white, with a female leader wielding the baton with

FEMALE BAND.

as much nerve as if she were old Arditi himself, are irresistible attractions to those whose tastes lead them to lager beer, and who like to partake of the beverage particularly in pleasant surroundings. A person does not get very much beer, but he hears a great deal of wild music, and unless he is over-sensitive he will

(412) FEMALE ORCHESTRA.

forgive the music and forget the beer — if he can. It is but a few years since that the keeper of a beer garden first introduced these institutions into American

JAMES O'NEILL.

life. His venture proved so successful that imitators sprang up all along the Bowery. The tenements of

the East Side were explored, and every female who could torture the neighbors with an accordeon, scrape the catgut or bang the piano was enlisted in the grand scheme of catering to the musical tastes of Gotham's beer drinkers.

"Over the Rhine," in Cincinnati, is a great place for cheap and vicious amusements. A correspondent writing from there says: "The places of amusement

AN IDEAL "MASHER."

"Over the Rhine" line Vine Street for half a dozen blocks. They are of the democratic and, with one exception, rude order, more familiar to the backwoods than to the civilization east of the Mississippi. Some are large establishments with all the fittings of an East Side variety theatre. Others are mere halls with a limited stage at one end. To some an admission is charged, ranging from ten cents up to twenty-five

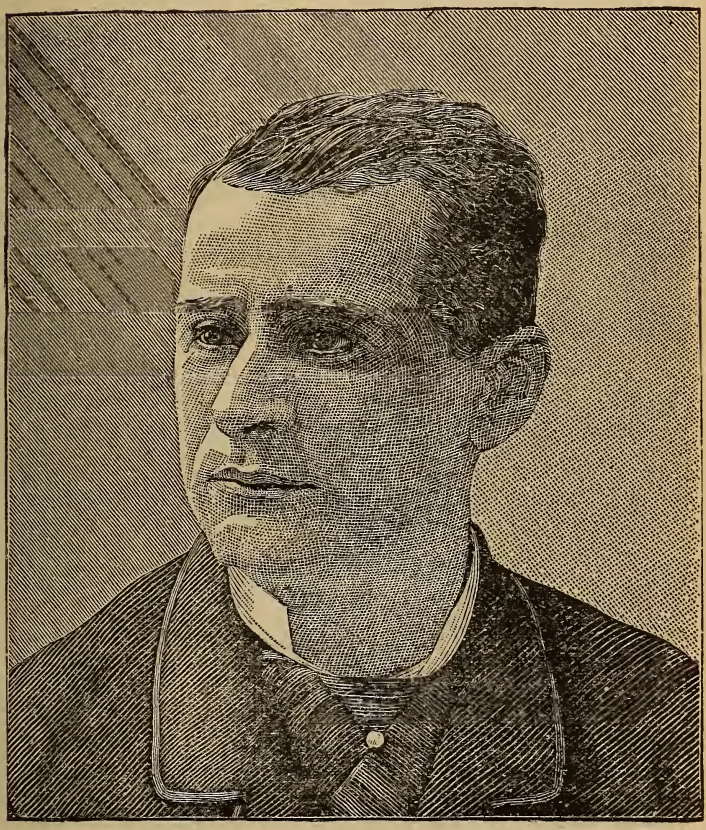
cents, but most of them are free. The performers include many familiar stars of the variety stage, for the salaries paid are of the best. The performances, though vulgar, are clean enough. The drinks pay all expenses, of course. Beer is served throughout the house and smoking is perpetually in order. In most places there is a gallery of boxes where the young women from the stage mingle with such of the audience as, by their generosity, deserve such honor. These are "stuffers," or as they call them here "chair warmers." One of them has conquered the soul of a local critic and he is actually puffing her into prominence in her peculiar line through the columns of one of the leading papers."

CHAPTER XXIX.

A TEAM OF IRISH COMEDIANS.

The variety stage is responsible for a great many theatrical "what-is-its." A few years ago there was not so much variety to the variety business; the projectors of mastodon and megatherian companies were not in the field to encourage poor artists, and only the really eminent and excellent in this branch of the profession were allowed to inflict themselves on first-class audiences. Now the dizziest of the throng make their way to the foot-lights under respectable auspices in the largest cities, and share with their really deserving brethern, about in equal parts, the sympathy and applause of large and fashionable houses. The different branches of the business are, at present, subdivided into more parts than there were formerly principal divisions, and every new feature of the profession has its exalted and also its insignificant exponents. There are a hundred and one different styles of song-and-dance men and song-and-dance women; serio-comics are as widely variant in their styles and repertoires, as they call the few songs they sing threadbare, as they are numerous and diverse in their types of beauty or ugliness; sketch artists have in their multiplicity infringed upon the legitimate comedians, the wild burlesques, and the highly operatic stars' territories; there are scores and scores of schools of musical mokes and thousands of performers with eccentric acts of one kind or another that are intended to astonish and be-

wilder the "natives," as they call the vast number of people who patronize their shows. But the Irish comedian stands out amid all these changes, immutable in his make-up and unmindful of the hoary age of the



EDWIN HARRIGAN.

jokes with which he tortures the intelligent portions of his audiences. He has been dressed and redressed and placed before the public in any number of shapes that were intended to be novel, extending from the one

extreme of the so-called neat Irish humorist to the other, at which stands the loud-mouthed, heel-clicking and head-breaking North of Ireland character; but the disguise is always thin, the efforts of the performers

TONY HART.

are vapid, and all the comedians succeed in looking pretty much alike, in saying the same melancholy things, and in betraying a kinship that is unmistakable and strongly provocative of pity.

A few performers have been successful in making reputations as North of Ireland characters, but they are very few. Ferguson and Mack were for a time at the head of this class of variety comedians, but they got lazy, failed to exhibit anything like extensive originality, and carted their old jokes and stale "business" to England and back, until they have fallen pretty much to the rear ranks. Harrigan & Hart, who have a large theatre in New York, and whose play, "Squatter Sovereignty," had a run of almost a year, are now the best known and really the cleverest of the members of the profession who make a specialty of Irish comedy. Billy Barry and Hugh Fay have made fame and money with their laughable "Muldoon's Picnic," and there are probably a score of others whose efforts would be worth mentioning if they could be recalled at this moment. As in all other lines, however, the ranks have been filled up with men and boys who are even more ignorant and ridiculous off the stage than on; who have graduated from newspaper hawking and boot blacking routes to the back door of the stage, and whose limited powers of mimicry, whose retentive memories for old and poor jokes, and whose rhinoceros-hide cheek — absolute "gall" they would call it themselves — are their only recommendations to any consideration. They, like all other really bad actors, look down upon every brother professional and imagine that they alone have attained to the privileged height above which there is no firm foothold for anybody else. It is the pleasing prerogative of all poor artists to have hallucinations of this kind, and to dwell in temples of fame that are built upon the sands of their own imaginations. Nobody ever disabuses them of their egotistical ideas, and if anybody attempted to do

so he would be set down as the very gausiest of "guys" for his pains.

The Irish comedian, and especially the eccentric gentleman who hails from the North of Ireland, has multiplied so rapidly of late that the stock of jokes with which the original North of Ireland comedian started out many years ago has been turned over thousands of times, and occasionally a modern audience actually cry when they are made parties to the ghoulish crime of resurrecting the dead and buried gags. It is my intention to here present the picture of a team of North of Ireland comedians, and give an idea of the manner in which they amuse their audiences; for some of the people who go to the theatre are so guileless and so easily tickled that they find themselves greatly amused by a dialogue teeming with ancient Hibernianisms. The stories chosen are invariably of the most vulgar and disgusting character, abounding in references and suggestions that would not be listened to outside of the theatre. The peddlers of these rare bits of stage humor choose all manner of make-ups to set off their stock in trade. A gorgeous plaid suit with baggy trousers and short coat topped by a high white hat, and the outfit completed with a cane; or a wardrobe consisting of a semi-respectable thin-sleeved, square-tailed frock coat and high-water broadcloth pants, with polished and towering stove-pipe hat; or a hod-carrier's rig; or any half-idiotic attempt to duplicate a workingman's get-up — a "gas-house tarrier," who tells you about Micky Duffy having got a job to wheel out smoke or to suck wind from bladders, — any of these may be chosen. The clothes may differ, but the jokes, the "business," and the facial pictures will always be found the same. Canes and stove-pipe hats — white or black — are even

more necessary for the success of an Irish comedian than is talent of any kind; the canes are used for thumping the floor of the stage, and the stove-pipe hats for banging each other in the face, for this class of comedians always travel in pairs. There is a great deal of floor-thumping and hat-slapping in one of their acts, and among the rough acrobatic aspirants to fame the feet are freely used upon each other, and there is a reckless lot of falling and tumbling in breakneck style upon the stage.

In making up his face the Irish comedian generally likes to indulge in a shrubbery of beard around the neck under either a clean shaven or stubble-strewn chin; if he aims at anything like decency in his appearances he will affect only brushy side-whiskers. A red expression around the nose and under the eyes, and a red or black wig to match his special eccentricity, complete his needs in this respect. The two specimens of Irish comedians that I have chosen for presentation here were of the alleged neat type in their profession. They were travelling with Tony Pastor when I saw them, and in their outward aspect greatly resembled Harry and Johnny Kernell. They were credited with holding a high position in their particular line, and their names were on the walls and fences in letters a foot long; in addition to this they came on late in the programme, which is always a sure indication of the importance of the estimate placed on an act or artist by the management.

But here comes one of them. The Stein Sisters have just finished a song-and-dance, "the flat," for the street scene comes together, the orchestra with a wild flourish of bass drum and cornet strikes up a familiar Irish melody, and, after a few bars, one of the comedians enters. He is tall, wears a gray woollen suit

of fashionable cut, a hat that never in the world would sit on an Irish head; a red-haired wig, partly bald, is secured under the hat; gaiters with black over-gaiters clothe the feet, and the face is smooth and genteel, except upon the chin, whence a long thin beard protrudes like a plowshare. An ordinary twenty-five-cent cane puts the finishing touches to his wardrobe. He looks like a hack-driver out for a holiday, or a Kerry Patch politician dressed for a Skirmishing Fund picnic. He faces the audience from the middle of the lower part of the stage as boldly as if he were going to entertain them with something new. He pretends to be angry, and when the music has ceased, begins to pace wildly up and down the front of the stage, as he shouts regardless of all the rules of common sense and elocution: —

"The oidea av callin' me a tarrier! Why a Spanyard can't walk the shtreets nowadays widout bein' taken for a Mick or a tarrier!"

There are always a few indiscreet people in the audience who laugh at this sally, and the comedian goes on: "But there's no use talkin', my b'y's bad as the rest av 'em. Whin he wint away from home, two years ago, he sez to me, sez he: 'Father, whin you hear from me ag'in I'll be President av the United States.' I got a letter from him last week sayin' he was wan av the foinest shoemakers in the State's prison." This also raises a laugh, and he continues: "But there's nawthin' but trouble in this wurrld. The other day I bought a horse, and the man tould me he'd throt a mile in two minits; and be heavens he could do it only fur wan thing — the disthance is too much fur the toime. [Laughter by the audience.] I'm railly ashamed ivery toime I take that animal out a roidin', fur I've got to put a soign upon him sayin',

'This is a horse.' [Laughter.] My woife an' her mother tuck the horse out fur a droive in the park the other day; the horse run away, the buggy upsot, an' my woife and mother-in-law war thrun out an' kilt. Now, whether you belave me or not, more than five hundred married min have bin afther me thryin' to b'y that horse. [Laughter by the male portion of the audience.] But I won't sell him, because I'm thinkin' av gettin' married ag'in meself. [Laughter.] I've got a gerrl — she's a swate craythur av sixteen summers, several hard winters [titter], and I think she's put in a couple av hard falls [laughter]; but she'll spring up ag'in all right. [Loud and indiscriminate laughter.] I tuck her to the shlaughter-house the other day to see 'em kill hogs. She wuz watchin' 'em butcher the poor craythers whin all to wonst she turns to me an' sez, sez she, 'Whin'll yure turn come, dear John?' [Laughter.] We're married now. My woife is very fond of cats. Three weeks ago she axed me to make her a prisint av wan, and I tuck wan home. That noight the cat got into my woife's bed-chamber, got into the bed, sucked her breath, and in the mornin' my woife was dead. The other noight I wint out an' got dhrunk, wint home and got in bed; the same cat kem and sucked my breath, and be heavens! whither ye belave me or not, in the mornin' the cat was dead!"

There are many persons in the audience who seem not to have read this story in the original Greek, — for it appears among the queer things Hierokles, the Joe Miller of ancient times, wrote, — and these persons laugh at the ghastly joke, while the orchestra gives a chord, and the comedian, tilting his hat forward, flourishing his cane and walking around the stage with the air of a man who has done an act of charity of which

he is proud, at last comes down to the foot-lights and sings: —

I'm Levi McGinnis
The alderman! The alderman!
I'm Levi McGinnis
The alderman so gay.

Or some equally nonsensical and jingling lines, after which he dances a few steps and hurriedly exits. As he is going off at one side his partner comes on at the opposite side with another armful of "chestnuts" — as they call worn-out gags, in the show business. The partner is known as Solomon O'Toole. He is dressed in square-cut frock coat, high vest, and short pantaloons, has a squatty, white, square-top, stiff hat, side-whiskers, — "Galway sluggers" or "Carolinas" they are usually called, — carries a cane, and altogether from the expression of his face seems a quiet and harmless fellow. His tongue is broguey but clear, and he speaks with a rapidity which suggests that he is either ashamed of what he is saying or is afraid he will forget some part of it. He says: —

"Now, I'm a man can shtand a joak, but whin I go into a barber shop on Sunday mornin' and the colored barber pins a newspaper under me chin an' hands me a towel to read, its goin' a little too far. [Laughter.] But whin a man goes out in the mornin', these days, there's no knowin' whether or not he'll come back ag'in at night. The other day I went to see a friend o' moine named John Gilligan, who lives at Newton Stuart, about tin moile from Poketown, on the Hog an' Hominy Road, an' he tuck me to hear a South Caroliny pr'acher who was pr'achin' an eloquint sarmin. Everything wint all roight until the pr'acher sez, sez he, "When God med the fust man he stud him up ag'inst a fince to dhry!" I hollered out, "Who

med the fince?" an' be heavens, they bounced me on the impulse av the momint. [Laughter.] But az I sed afore, whin a man goes out in the mornin' he never knows what's goin' to happen. The other mornin' I wint over to the Grand Paycific Hotel — I go there every morning'; there's a friend av mine boardin' there be the waik, an' whin he laves town I go over an' ate his males for him; but I wint over there th' other mornin' an' picked up a paper an' I read an arteckle headed 'The Chinaise Must Go.' Now, be heavens, I don't want the fellow that's got my three shurrts to go until I git 'em back from him ag'in. [Laughter.] A friend av moine named Gilligan bought a goat the other day, an' he goes about the shtreets atin' eysthercans an' knockin' the childher over in the gutter. He butted over a little nagur b'y th' other mornin', and whin Gilligan was taken to coort he summoned me as a witness for the prosecution. Whin I tuck the witness shtand the judge axed me what me name waz, an' I sed Michael Mahoney; an' he axed me what war me nationality, whin be way av a joak I sez, sez I, 'I-talyan,' an' be heavens, he gev me six months for perjuree. [Laughter.] I wint into a salune th' other day; some av the b'ys war settin' around a table playin' cassinoe, an' whin they saw me come in, one av 'em sez, sez he, 'Luck out for the Mick, or he'll swipe up all the lunch!' [Laughter.] I've got a b'y that the Chicago base-ball club used for a foul flag on rainy days. [Smiles.] They threw a ball to him th' other day an' hit him in th' eye; I tuck him to an occulist who tuck the eye out an' laid it on a table; be heavens, a cat kem along an' swallied the eye. [Smiles.] The docthor tould me to kum around next day, an' I tuck the b'y wid me. The occulist had cut out wan av his cat's eyes, an' he puts

it into the b'ys head. [Audible smiles.] Now the b'ys doin' fust rate, only whin he goes to bed at noight wan eye stez open an' keeps roamin' around fur rats. [Laughter.] Gilligan has got two b'ys. Wan av thim hasn' spint a cint fur two year; he'll be out (of prison) in October. [Laughter.] The other b'y will make his mark in the world; in fact he med his mark on me the other noight. He put a tack on a chair with the belligerint ind to'rds me, an' whin I wint to sit down I got up ag'in very suddintly. I don't care how ould a man is, or how tired he is, whin he sits down on the belligerint ind av a tack he is bound to assoom agility an' youthfulness. [Laughter.] It may be but a momentary assumption, but the agility is always there. The other mornin' I intered a friend's saluue. There war grape shkins on the flure, an' I sez to him, 'How do ye do, Mr. Cassidy? I see you had a party last night.' 'What makes you think so?' sez he. 'Because I see the grape shkins on the flure,' sez I. 'Thim's not grape shkins,' sez he; thim's eyes. Some of the b'ys hed a fight here lasht noight an' you're now surveyin' the battle-field.' [Laughter.] But I was expectin' a friend av moine down here, Levi McGinnis. Ah, here he comes. Levi, how are you?"

"I'm well, Solomon," says the other, who has come on the stage and is shaking hands with Solomon. "What kept you so quick?"

"I'd been here sooner," is the smart response, "only I couldn't get down any later."

"It waz a very wet winther we had lasht winther, Solomon?"

"Yes. Did you buy any rubbers yet this year?"

"Not this year."

"Goodyear."

"Where did you go when you left me th' other noight?" Levi continues.

"I went down to the maskeerade ball."

"I heard you was there. They put you out because you wouldn't take your mask off after 12 o'clock."

"But I didn't have any mask on. It waz me own face."

"That's what I tould them," says Levi, "but they wouldn't belave me."

This raises a laugh. Solomon looks for a moment with astonishment at Levi, then thumps his cane against the floor in an angry manner, and walks in a circle around the stage as if terribly disgusted at having allowed himself to be sold. This look, cane-thumping and walk-around are stereotyped Hibernianisms, and are introduced at the end of each "sell." As Solomon O'Toole gets sold all the time this end of the business is as exclusively his as if he had a patent on it.

"I went into a salune this mornin'," said Solomon, "to git a glass av beer. I got me beer, ped foive sints, and waz jist goin' to blow the foam off it when somebody cries out, 'Foight!' I laid down me beer an' run out the dure to see where the foight waz, but there was no foight. Whin I got back me beer waz gone. I called for another glass an' waz goin' to dhrink it down, when somebody shouts, 'Foire!' Now I wanted to see the foire an' I didn't want to lose me beer, so I pulls out a bit av pincil an' paper an' wroites on it, 'I have shpit in this beer.' When I puts the paper on tap av the beer an' wint out to see the foire. There was no foire, an' what do you think happin'd whin I got back?"

"Your beer waz gone," said Levi.

"No it wazn't," Solomon interposed. "The beer

waz there an' the bit av paper waz on tap av it, but some sucker had wrote roight ander my wroitin', 'So hev I.'"

The conclusion of the story is of course greeted with laughter.

"Here, Solomon," says Levi, "I want to make you a prisent."

"An' what's this?" Asks Solomon, examining the article that has been handed to him.

"A shoe horn."

"An' what do I want wid an ould shoe horn?"

"Thry an' get your hat on your head with it" answers Levi, amid an outburst of merriment from the audience.

"How long can a man live widout brains?" is Solomon's next conundrum.

"I don't know," says Levi. "How ould are you now?" [Laughter.]

"What is a plate of hash?" Levi asks.

"An insult to a square meal," Solomon answers triumphantly.

"Thin you can shtand more insults than any other man I ever saw," says Levi, whereat Solomon's indignation causes him to manœuvre to the right of stage in proper position for the next question.

"What's the diff'rence betwane you and a jackass?" he asks, looking sternly at Levi.

The latter measures the floor with his eye, and answers, "About twelve foot." Solomon thumps his cane against the floor once more, looks bereft of all the pleasure he ever possessed on earth, and moving up to Levi, says: —

"No, that's not the roight answer."

"Well," says Levi, "I'd loike to know what is the diff 'rince betwane you an' a jackass?"

"No diff'rince," shouts Solomon, throwing up his hands, and coming down the stage shaking with laughter. Suddenly the fact dawns upon him that he has made a mule of himself. His face assumes a bewildered expression, and he hastily returns from the scene followed by Levi McGinniss, while the orchestra strikes up a lively air in anticipation of the encore which is to call the comedians out to do a wild Irish reel.

This is a fair sample of the dialogue indulged in by a team of Irish comedians of average ability, and the reader will at once understand from it what ridiculous and almost disgusting language and incidents are made use of to raise a laugh, and how very easy it is to please a variety theatre audience. Pat Rooney's shrug of the shoulders and Land-League phiz, or somebody else's queer walk becomes the rage, and immediately there are a hundred weak and pitiful imitators. So, too, with such a dialogue as the foregoing; it seems to "catch on" with the public, and every Irish comedian on the stage must appropriate at least a portion of it, — and usually the very worst portion. It is safe to assume that the variety stage to-day has no so-called North of Ireland Irishman who does not fling at least a half-dozen of the sorry witticisms I have here given, at the heads of his audience. There is no law against it, — no protection for the patrons of the theatres, who can do nothing else than to grin and stand it, — and therefore the Irish comedian and his "chestnuts" forever flourish in this land of the free and home of the brave.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BLACK ART.

The black art, as the art of magic is termed, has arrived at a degree of perfection that is amazing. The magicians of the Orient for a long time were held up as superior to any rivals outside their country. They sat in the streets, and without paraphernalia caused flowers to burst from pots of earth and spring into instantaneous growth; they had their then wonderful basket trick, in which a boy, having entered a basket, to all appearances just large enough to receive him, remained there while the magician ran his sword through the basket in all directions, after which the boy came forth unharmed; there were sword swallowers among them, and altogether their skill in and knowledge of the art of mystifying was considered beyond reproach. The Chinese, too, profess to be good jugglers and magicians, and so they are. But the Europeans and the Americans have stepped in, and the Hindoo and the Chinaman may now go to the rear in magic. Houdin, Heller, Macallister, and Hermann have done tricks far superior to anything the Eastern wonder-workers are capable of, either in the way of mechanical intricacy or manual dexterity. The latter feature is cultivated entirely, and you no longer see the magician's stage covered high and low with glittering paraphernalia, whose brightness was beautifully set off by the black velvet hangings in the background. Now there is nothing presented to the view of the audience except a small

table in the centre of the stage. Taking Mr. Hermann, for example: This magician comes out in full evening dress, with coat sleeves pushed back revealing his immaculate shirt cuffs and gorgeous sleeve buttons. Whatever articles he will inject into his tricks he carries in the capacious pockets of his coat or in the palm of his hand. He introduces himself pleasantly to the audience in his broken English, and at once the performance begins. From that time on until the last illusion is given the audience remains in darkness as to his methods. He seldom leaves the stage, going only up to the last entrance, where, by standing against the projecting wing his confederate can fill his pockets with what he needs. A magician's coat looks like a very common-place effort at the swallow-tail article. That's all it is exteriorly, but if you get a glimpse of the side the lining is on, you will find from eight to a dozen large and small pockets in the garment. Two of the pockets are huge affairs, running from the front edge back under the arms, thus leaving a wide mouth, so that large articles can quickly be dropped into them.

Hermann is a great trickster, not only on the stage, but off. He walked into a barber-shop in Memphis one day, went up to the place where the razors were kept, and taking up one, calmly cut his throat, standing before the glass after the gash had been made, and with evident pleasure regarding the profuse flow of blood from the wound. The barbers and their customers ran wildly into the streets yelling like a tribe of Feejees around a barbecue of roast missionary. They called the police, and raised a small riot in their immediate neighborhood. The police came and entered the shop, only to find Hermann coming forward to greet them, laughing and remarking that it was only a

little practical joke. There was not the slightest sign of any wound upon his throat, and it was only when the barbers were told that it was Hermann, the magician, that they could be brought to believe that he had not really cut his throat through, and then by some wonderful healing art closed the gap again.

HERMANN'S "SELL."

During his engagement in New York last season, the famous magician demoralized a waiter and the proprietor of a German beer saloon by making the foaming glass appear and disappear, and in receiving the accurate change of a five-dollar note counted it be-

fore the chagrined proprietor and made it appear that the amount returned was $12, which he coolly pocketed. But his best trick was the "sell" he perpetrated on the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He had it announced that he would resume his old feat of blowing a child from a cannon, and making it appear safe and sound in the gallery of the theatre. This set the society in arms at once. He was notified that if he tried it the child (an apprentice) would be taken from him. He replied that he was going to rehearse the feat on Thursday morning, anyhow; whereupon an agent of the society, with a writ of *habeas corpus*, rushed upon the scene. Just as he was about to ram the child into the piece of heavy ordnance aimed at the gallery of the Grand Opera House, the agent seized it and a tussel ensued between him and the magician. In the pulling and hauling one of the legs of the disputed youngster came off, and it was dicovered that it was only a gigantic, well-made-up doll. The agent escaped amid roars of laughter, leaving his trophy behind. The press, too, had been sold by the trick, so none of the papers published the item.

Much as Hermann has sold others, he has been pretty badly sold himself. I remember one night while Hermann was playing South, and doing his cabinet trick, some of the boys around the theatre put up a job on him that resulted disastrously as far as the trick was concerned. The cabinet is a large contrivance greatly resembling the huge refrigerators in use in grocery stores, and some who know, say, bearing a great resemblance to saloon refrigerators. It has a false back and is so constructed that one or more persons may be hidden in the rear compartment. In the trick Hermann makes use of two colored boys, who must be

alike in size and facial appearance. Only one of the boys figures in the trick at first, going through a funny bit of play and dialogue with the magician, until at last he leaves the stage to get a knife with which to combat a big monkey that has been locked up in the cabinet. When boy No. 1 goes off the stage for a knife boy No. 2 comes back with it and is hurriedly pushed into the cabinet. Meanwhile boy No. 1 has left the stage-door and is running fast as he can around the block. The magician after standing at the cabinet a few minutes — just long enough to allow boy No. 1 to get to the front entrance of the theatre — opens the door, and lo! boy No. 2 is gone. "Boyee! Boy-ee!" the magician shouts, "Say boy-ee w'ere are you, boy-ee?" "Here I is, boss," the boy shouts, rushing breathlessly up the aisle. The trick surprises everybody, and is a good one. On the occasion I refer to, the "boys" got a policeman to arrest the lad while he was running around from the back to the front door. The blue-coat took him to the station and Hermann shouted in vain for his "boy-ee," and was finally obliged to close the trick without the appearance of his darkey confederate.

As I have spoken above about the jugglers and tricksters of the Orient I may as well say that I witnessed the performances of the trickster who was in Harry French's Hindoo troupe. There was nothing marvellous in his feats, the boy-and-basket trick alone being the only thing of an astonishing character that he presented, and that being susceptible of easy explanation, the boy being light and supple and capable of moving or contracting his body so as to keep out of the way of the sword thrusts, which by the way were not of a violent character. In a private entertainment given by this juggler he appeared more awkward and

clumsier than many an amateur who undertakes to furnish a parlor entertainment for his friends. It was evident that he would undergo suffering and pain for the success of a trick, as he took an ordinary wooden tooth-pick and while pretending to push it, in its entirety, into one corner of his eye, actually did push part of it in, not having broken it off short enough in the process of concealing it. Again he swallowed a yard of black thread, and taking a knife cut a small opening in his side and brought forth a yard of black thread that had, of course, been concealed there beforehand. The thread was bloody and was drawn slowly from its place of concealment.

A correspondent writing from China about the street jugglers to be seen there, says: "Sword-swallowing and stone-eating appear to be the commonest feats, and operators of this description may be found in almost every street. One fellow, however, performed a number of feats in front of our hotel, which demand from me more than a passing notice. He stationed himself in the middle of the street, and having blown a bugle-blast to give warning that he was about to begin his entertainment, he took a small lemon or orange tree, which was covered with fruit, and balanced it upon his head. He then blew a sort of chirruping whistle, when immediately a number of rice birds came from every direction, and settled upon the boughs of the bush he balanced or fluttered about his head. He then took a cup in his hand, and began to rattle some seeds in it, when the birds disappeared. Taking a small bamboo tube, he next took the seeds and putting one in it blew it at one of the fruit, when it opened and out flew one of the birds, which fluttered about the circle surrounding the performer. He continued to shoot the seeds at the oranges until

nearly a dozen birds were released. He then removed the tree from his forehead, and setting it down, took up a dish, which he held above his head, when all the birds flew into it, then covered it over with a cover, and giving it a whirl or two about his head, opened it and displayed a quantity of eggs, the shells of which he broke with a little stick, releasing a bird from each shell. The trick was neatly performed, and defied detection from my eyes. The next trick was equally astonishing and difficult of detection. Borrowing a handkerchief from one of his spectators, he took an orange, cut a small hole in it, then squeezed all the juice out, and crammed the handkerchief into it. Giving the orange to a bystander to hold, he caught up a teapot and began to pour a cup of tea from it, when the spout became clogged. Looking into the pot, apparently to detect what was the matter, he pulled out the handkerchief and returned it to the owner. He next took the orange from the bystander and cut it open, when it was found to be full of rice."

Two of the finest tricks now on the stage are the ærial suspension and the Indian box-trick. The latter I explain in the next chapter. The ærial suspension, which is best seen in Prof. Seeman's performances, consists in apparantly mesmerizing a young lady while she is standing on a stool between two upright bars, upon each of which she rests an elbow. When she is in the mesmeric state the stool is removed, leaving her suspended upon both elbows; then one of the bars — that under the left elbow — is removed, and the fair subject still remains motionless, her entire weight resting upon the elbow of the right arm, which is extended out from the body, with the hand thrown easily and gracefully against the cheek. Next, her figure is pushed out from the bar through various

angles, until at last she reclines upon her strange ærial couch, which is scarcely more than one inch in diameter. The illusion is a beautiful one, and astonishes all who see it. Occasionally the creaking of the steel joints under the elbow is heard out in the audience, "giving away" the feat, for the actual fact is that the young lady is not in a mesmeric condition, but is held in position by a steel armor worn under her costume, with a joint at the elbow that fits into the upright bar, where a powerful system of leverage holds the body in any position desired.

Hermann's bird trick is a fine one. He comes before the audience with a living bird in a small cage held between both hands, and "Wan! Two! T'ree!" with a sudden movement, and without turning away from the audience spreads his arms, when, lo! the bird and cage have disappeared. The explanation given by some is that the cage is made of rubber, which, when released envelopes the bird in a sort of sack which flies up the magician's sleeve.

Nearly every young man in the land who has seen a magician on the stage, wants to master the black art. It is very easy for him to do so. All he needs is a great deal of what is vulgarly known as "cheek," and termed in theatrical slang, "gall," a quick eye, and ease and rapidity of movement in handling articles. The first thing to be learned is the art of "palming"—concealing small objects in the palm of the hand. Coins, balls, handkerchiefs, etc., are hidden in this way, being held in the open hand by the pressure of the fleshy part of the thumb. In this way the shower of coin and many like tricks are done. When the art of "palming" is understood, rapidity of movement is the next thing, and then come the mechanical and other tricks.

Only the old-school magicians — the fakirs — retain the fire-eating trick in their entertainments. Any school-boy can do it now, as the preparation for it is very simple. By anointing the tongue with liquid storax, a red-hot poker may be licked cool, or coals taken from the fire may be placed upon the tongue and left there until they become black. To any person who has an appetite for flames, or for whom five-cent whiskey is not fiery enough, a trial of this trick will be gratifying. And should there be a desire to walk on fire or on red-hot iron, let the aspiring salamander take half an ounce of camphor, dissolve it in two ounces of aqua vitæ, add to it one ounce of quicksilver, one ounce of liquid storax, which is the droppings of myrrh, and prevents the camphor from firing; take also two ounces of hematis, which is red stone, to be had at the druggist's. Let them beat it to a powder in their great mortar, for being very hard it cannot well be reduced in a small one; add this to the ingredients already specified, and when the walking is to be done anoint the feet with the preparation, when the trick may be accomplished without the slightest danger.

If anybody desires to be ghastly in his trickery, he may cut a man's head off and put it in a platter a yard from his body. This is done by causing a board, a cloth, and a platter to be purposely made with holes in each to fit a boy's neck. The board must be made of two planks, the longer and broader the better; there must be left within half a yard of the end of each plank half a hole, that both the planks being put together, there may remain two holes like those in a pair of stocks. There must be made, likewise, a hole in the cloth; a platter having a hole of the same size in the middle, and having a piece taken out at one side the size of the neck, so that he may place his head

above; must be set directly over it; then the boy sitting or kneeling under the board must let the head only remain upon the board in the frame. To make the sight more dreadful, put a little brimstone into a chafing-dish of coals, and set it before the head of the boy, who must gasp two or three times that the smoke may enter his nostrils and mouth, and the head presently will appear stark dead, and if a little blood be sprinkled on his face, the sight will appear more dreadful. This is commonly practised with boys instructed for that purpose. At the other end of the table, where the other hole is made, another boy of the same size as the first boy must be placed, his body on the table and his head through the hole in the table, at the opposite end to where the head is which is exhibited.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE INDIAN BOX-AND-BASKET TRICK.

The Indian box-and-basket trick was for a long time a mystery even among magicians, and now it puzzles astute people to understand how the young man or young woman who has been tied in a sack and placed under lock and key in a wicker basket on top of a box not only locked and sealed but tied in all directions with stout rope, can get out of the sack and basket and into the box within very few minutes. In 1873 Barnum paid £1,000 to a London trickster for the so-called mystery. This extraordinary feat which puzzled the knowing ones for so long a time was explained to me once by a magician, and will be found so simple as to astonish those who read the explanation.

The magician begins by announcing the trick; he then brings on the stage a large wooden box-like trunk (Fig. 1) with hinges and hasps on it. A committee is generally called from the audience to examine the box to see that there is no deception in its apparent stoutness. They look it over and over and discover nothing. They then lock the box, retain the keys, and stop up the key-holes with sealing-wax. The committee also, amid the shouts of the audience to

Fig. 1.

"tie it up tight," wind rope around the box in all directions, making innumerable knots and using every effort to secure the box firmly. Then on top of the box is placed a board about as wide as the lid of the box, and on the opposite ends of which are heavy plate staples. (Fig. 2.) The magician's assistant now steps to the foot-lights and is introduced to the crowd he, or she, is to astonish. A sack is brought forward, the assistant lightly mounts to the board on top of the box, gets into the sack, within which there is generally a stool, so that the person inside may sit down. The magician begins to tie up the sack; he gathers the top of it in his hands, and in the meantime the assistant thrusts through the opening a portion of another sack, and with his hands over his head holds in place the gathered end of the sack in which he is concealed while the magician ties a rope around the false end.

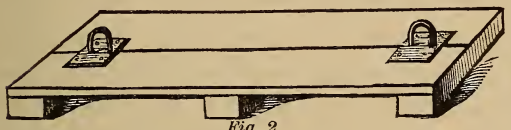


Fig. 2.

The basket is a high, comical-shaped wicker affair, with a heavy ring around its mouth and two large staples at opposite sides. (Fig. 3.) When the basket is placed over the assistant, the staples in its ring fit exactly over those on the board above the box; padlocks are passed through

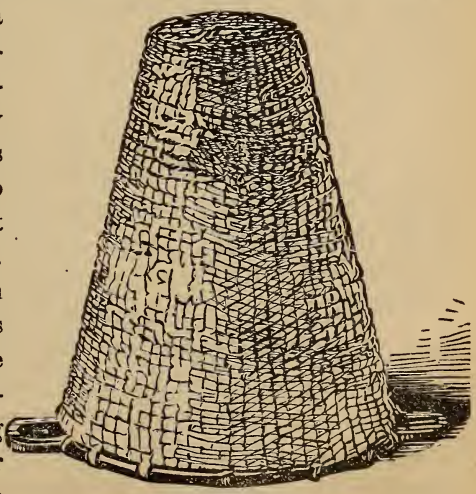


Fig. 3.

the staples and locked, the committee hold the key, and sealing-wax is again applied to the key-hole. The trick is now ready, the magician draws a screen across to hide the box and basket from the audience, and usually within two minutes the signal is given that the feat has been accomplished. Sometimes this signal is a pistol shot; at other times a whistle. The screen is thrown aside, the seals on the locks are unbroken; everything is in exactly the position in which the committee left it, the ropes remain securely tied, seem undisturbed, and on opening the box, which is still stout and innocent-looking as ever, the assistant tumbles out and the trick comes to an end amid the wild plaudits of the audience and an occasional uncomplimentary hoot at the committeemen.

How is it done? The simple-looking contrivance that forms the foundation of the mystery is nothing more or less than a trick-box. Along the edges of the front, back and ends are fastened stout battens, as can be seen in the cut. These battens are screwed to the boards which form the upper part of the box. The lower boards at front and back and both ends are simply sliding panels. The parts of these panels which come directly behind the battens are filled with iron plates pierced with holes of the shape to be seen in Fig. 4. The screws on the lower parts of the batten are dummies — that is, they go only partly through the battens, and do not reach the panels. On the inner sides of the battens are iron plates, each carrying a stud, so that when the parts of the panel plates marked *A* come directly opposite the studs of the battens, the panel, if pressed or pushed, will fall inside the box; but if the studs be pressed through *A*, and

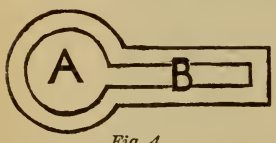


Fig. 4.

the panels shoved along so that the shanks of the studs slide through the slatted parts, *B*, the panels will be locked securely. The unsuspicious air-holes you see in the panels are there for a purpose; the performer uses them to give him a purchase, so that either with his fingers or by means of a small iron rod he may slide the panels backward or forward.

There is another piece of trickery in the construction of the board that rests on the box and upon which the basket is placed. The plate staples are "crooked;" that is, the staples are not of a piece with the plates, but are separate; they are made with a shoulder, and on each of the ends which fit tightly into holes through the plates, there is an oval-shaped hole, as shown in Fig. 5. Inside the board are two double bolts which pass through these holes and keep the staples in place. The person under the basket passes a thin steel blade between the boards and slides back the bolts at one end. He then lifts the basket, and with it the staple. Once outside the basket he replaces it against the staple in the plate, pushes it down, its rounded ends acting like wedges to pushing the bolts back, which come together again through the oval holes of the staple, locking it firmly to the board again. All that remains to be done, then, is to slide the panel of the box, push it in, creep through the closely woven ropes and inside the box, put the panel back in its place and the trick is at an end.

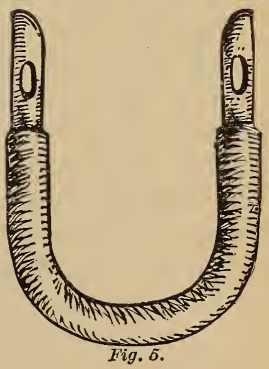


Fig. 5.

Occasionally a performer does not find it as easy to do this trick as it reads here. He may sometimes get

stuck in the basket, or may find it impossible to get into the box. The sack is no trouble to him at all, for he is never really tied in the sack, — all he has to do is to crawl out of it. Carabgraba, I think it was, while exhibiting the Indian box-trick in Chicago at the Adelphi Theatre, in 1874, met with an accident that set the house in an uproar, and came near precipitating a panic. His assistant, who had succeeded in getting out of the basket, snapped in two a small iron rod he used for sliding the panel, and despite a long and desperate effort could not succeed in opening the box. All he could do was to come from behind the screen, walk to the foot-lights and beg to be excused. An expert rope-tier had secured the box, as one of the committee called upon to do so, and the audience crediting the expert with the failure of the trick, cried fraud, and grew greatly excited. They would listen to no explanation until Leonard Grover, then manager of the Adelphi, came forward and promised that the trick would be performed later in the evening, and that, in the meantime, the box should remain in full sight of the audience, both of which promises were faithfully kept.

As it always takes some time to do this trick, the magician has some kind of a "ghost story" fixed up to entertain his audience. An old ex-conjurer, writing in *Scribner's Monthly* on the subject, gave the following talk, with which he usually diverted his patrons while his assistant was getting into the box: —

"And *apropos* of spiritualism," I would say, "I will, with your permission, relate the adventure of a servant girl at a spiritual seance. Miss Honora Murphy, a young female engaged in the honorable and praiseworthy occupation of general housework merely to dispel *ennui*, not hearing in some time from the

'b'y at home' to whom she was engaged to be 'married,' was advised by the 'gerrl next doore' to consult the spirits. Miss Murphy objected at first on the ground that she had taken her 'Father Matchew seventeen year afore in her parish church at home an' niver drunk sperrits,' but finally concluded to follow the advice. The result I shall give you as detailed by her to her friend:"—

"How kem I by the black eye? Well, dear, I'll tell yer. Afther what yer wur tellin' me, I niver closed me eyes. The nixt marnin' I ast Maggie Harnahan, the up-stairs gerrl, where was herself. 'In her boodoore,' sez Maggie, an' up I goes to her.

"'What's wantin', 'Nora?' sez she.

"'I've jist heerd as how me cousin's very sick,' sez I, 'an' I'm that frettin', I mus' go an' see her.'

"Fitter fur yer ter go ter yer wurruk,' sez she, lookin' mighty crass, an' she the lazy hulks as niver does a turn from mornin' till night.

"'Well, dear, I niver takes sass from anny av 'em, so I ups an' tould her, 'Sorra taste av wurk I'll do the day, an' av yer don't like it, yer can fin' some wan else,' an' I flounced mesel' out av the boodoore."

"Well, I wint to me room ter dress mesel,' an' whin I got on me sale-shkin sack, I thought av me poor ould mother — may the hivins be her bed! — could only see me, how kilt she'd be intoirely. Whin I was dressed I wint down-stairs, an' out the front doore, an' I tell yer *I slammed it well after me.*

"Well, me dear, whin I got ter the majum's, a big chap wid long hair and a baird like a billy-goat kem inter the room. Sez he: —

"'Do yer want to see the majum?'

"'I do,' sez I.

"'Two dollars,' sez he.

"'For what?' says I.

"'For the sayants,' sez he.

"'Faix, it's no aunts I want to see,' sez I, 'but Luke Corrigan's own self.' Well, me dear, wid that he gev a laugh ye'd think 'd riz the roof.

"'Is he yer husban'?' sez he.

"'It's mighty 'quisitive ye are,' sez I, 'but he's not me husban', av yer want ter know, but I want ter larn av it's alive or dead he is, which the Lord forbid!'

"'Yer jist in the nick er time,' sez he.

"'Faix, Ould Nick's here all the time, I'm thinkin', from what I hear,' sez I.

"Well, ter make a long story short, I ped me two dollars, an' wint into another room, an' if ye'd guess from now till Aisther, ye'd never think what the majum was. As I'm standin' here, 'twas *nothin' but a woman!* I was that bet, I was a'most spacheless.

"'Be sated, madam,' sez she, p'ntin' to a chair, an' I seed at wanst that she was a very shuperior sort o' person. 'Be sated,' sez she. 'Yer mus' jine the circle.'

"'Faix, I'll ate a thriangle, av yer wish,' sez I.

"'Yer mus' be very quite,' sez she. An' so I sot down along a lot av other folks at a table.

"'First, I'll sing a him,' sez the majum, 'an' thin do all yees jine in the chorus.'

"'Yer mus' axcuse me, ma'am.' sez I. 'I niver could sing, but rather than spile the divarshun o' the company, av any wan'll whistle, I'll dance as purty a jig as ye'll see from here to Bal'nasloe, though it's mesel' as sez it.'

"Two young whipper-snappers begin ter laugh, but the luk I gev'em soon shut 'em up

"Jist then, the big chap as had me two dollars kem

into the room an' turned down the lights; in a minit majum, shtickin' her face close to me own, whispers:

"'The sperrits is about — I kin feel 'em!'

"'Thrue for you, ma'am,' sez I, 'fur I kin smell 'em!'

"'Hush, the in*flu*ence is an me,' sez the majum. 'I kin see the lion an' the lamb lying down together.'

"'Begorra! It's like a wild beastess show,' sez I.

"'Will yer be quite?' sez an ould chap nex' ter me. 'I hev a question to ax.

"'Ax yer question,' say I, 'an' I'll ax mine. I ped me two dollars, an' I'll not be put down.'

"'Plaze be quite,' sez the majum, 'or the sperrits 'll lave.'

"Jist then kem a rap on the table.

"'Is that the sperrit of Luke Corrigan?' sez the majum.

"'It is not,' sez I, 'for he could bate any boy in Kilballyowen, an' if his fist hit that table 'twould knock it to smithereens.'

"'Whist?' sez the majum; 'it's John's Bunions.'

"'Ax him 'bout his progress,' sez a woman wid a face like a bowl of stirabout.

"'Ah, bathershin!' sez I. 'Let John's bunions alone and bring Luke Corrigan to the fore.'

"'Hish!' whispers the majum; 'I feel a sperrit nare me.'

"'Feel av it has a wart on its nose;' sez I, 'for be that token ye'll know it's Luke.'

"'The moment is suspicious,' says the majum.

"'I hope yer don't want to asperge me character,' sez I.

"'Whist!' sez she; 'the sperrits is droopin.'

"'It's droppin' yer mane,' sez I, pickin' up a small bottle she let fall from her pocket.

"'Put that woman out,' sez an ould chap.

"'Who do ye call a woman?' sez I. 'Lay a finger on me, an' I'll scratch a map of the County Clare on yer ugly phiz.'

"'Put her out!' 'Put her out!' sez two or three others, an' they med a lep for me. But, holy rocket! I was up in a minute.

"'Bring an yer fightin' sperrits,' I cried, "from Julus Sazar to Tim Maconle, an' I'll bate 'em all fur the glory av ould Ireland!'

"The big chap as had me money kem behin' me, an' put his elbow in me eye; but me jewel, I tassed him over as if he bin a feather, an' the money rowled out his pocket. Wid a cry av 'Faugh-a-ballah!' I grabbed six dollars, runned out av the doore, an' I'll never put fut in the house ag'in. An' that's how I kem be the eye."

A story like this gives the magician's assistant plenty of time to work the trick. Sometimes a magician whose confidence in his assistant is not strong, or whose paraphernalia is limited, will have only the box, and will satisfy himself with merely "tying" his assistant in a sack on top of the box. This way the trick is surer and a great deal easier than when the basket is used.

CHAPTER XXXII.

VENTRILOQUISM.

All who have heard Prof. Kennedy or Val Vose with their funny little figures have wondered how they managed to produce such an effect upon their audience — to completely delude them into the belief that the speech came from the moving lips of the little wooden heads and not from the closed and motionless labials of the ventriloquists. Both gentlemen are thoroughly familiar with their art, and the entertainment they give may be taken as a sample of the possibilities of ventriloquism. The history of the art goes back to Biblical times, but not until the eighteenth century have we anecdotes of the remarkable performances of men endowed with the gift. The earliest notice of the illusion, as carried out in modern times, has reference to Louis Brabant *valet de chambre* to Francis I. Having been rejected by the parents of a rich heiress he wished to wed, he waited until the father was dead; then he visited the widow, whom he caused to hear the voice of her husband coming from above commanding her to give their daughter in marriage to Louis, that he (the father) might be relieved from purgatory. The widow was only too glad to comply. Now, Louis wanted a wedding portion, so he went to one Cornu, a rich, miserly, and usurious banker at Lyons, whom he terrified into giving him ten thousand crowns by the old trick of parent and purgatory.

The works of M. L'Abbe La Chapelle, issued 1772,

contain descriptions of the ventriloquial achievements of Baron Mengen at Vienna; and those of M. St. Gille, near Paris, are equally interesting and astonishing. The former ingeniously constructed a doll with moveable lips, which he could readily control by a movement of the fingers under the dress; and with this automaton he was accustomed to hold humorous and satirical dialogues. He ascribed proficiency in his art to the frequent gratification of a propensity for counterfeiting the cries of the lower animals, and the voices of persons with whom he was in contact.

La Chapelle, having heard many surprising circumstances related concerning one M. St. Gille, a grocer at St. Germainen-Laye, near Paris, whose powers as a ventriloquist had given occasion to many singular and diverting scenes, formed the resolution of seeing him. Being seated with him on the opposite side of a fire, in a parlor on the ground floor, and very attentively observing him, the Abbe, after half an hour's conversation with M. St. Gille, heard himself called, on a sudden, by his name and title, in a voice that seemed to come from the roof of a house at a distance; and whilst he was pointing to the house from which the voice had appeared to him to proceed, he was yet more surprised at hearing the words, "it was not from that quarter," apparently in the same kind of voice as before, but which now seemed to issue from under the earth at one of the corners of the room. In short, this fictitious voice played, as it were, everywhere about him, and seemed to proceed from any quarter or distance from which the operator chose to transmit it to him. To the Abbe, though conscious that the voice proceeded from the mouth of M. St. Gille, he appeared absolutely mute while he was exercising his talent; nor could any change in his countenance be discovered.

But he observed that M. St. Gille presented only the profile of his face to him while he was speaking as a ventriloquist.

On another occasion, M. St. Gille sought for shelter from a storm in a neighboring convent; and finding the community in mourning, and inquiring the cause, he was told that one of their body, much esteemed by them, had lately died. Some of their religious brethren attended him to the church, and showing him the tomb of their deceased brother, spoke very feelingly of the scanty honors that had been bestowed on his memory, when suddenly a voice was heard, apparently proceeding from the roof of the choir, lamenting the situation of the defunct in purgatory, and reproaching the brotherhood with their want of zeal on his account. The whole community being afterwards convened in the church, the voice from the roof renewed its lamentations and reproaches, and the whole convent fell on their faces, and vowed a solemn reparation. Accordingly, they first chanted a *De profundis* in full choir; during the intervals of which the ghost occasionally expressed the comfort he received from their pious exercises and ejaculations in his behalf. The prior, when this religious service was concluded, entered into a serious conversation with M. St. Gille, and inveighed against the incredulity of our modern sceptics and pretended philosophers on the article of ghosts and apparitions; and St. Gille found it difficult to convince the fathers that the whole was a deception.

M. Alexandre, the noted ventriloquist, had an extraordinary facility in counterfeiting the faces of other people. At Abbotsford, during a visit there, he actually sat to a sculptor five times in the character of a noted clergyman, with whose real features the sculptor was well acquainted. When the sittings were

closed and the bust modelled, the mimic cast off his wig and assumed dress, and appeared with his own natural countenance, to the terror almost of the sculptor, and to the great amusement of Sir Walter Scott and others who had been in the secret.

Of this most celebrated ventriloquist it is related that on one occasion he was passing along the Strand, when a friend desired a specimen of his abilities. At this instant a load of hay was passing along near Temple Bar, when Alexandre called attention to the suffocating cries of a man in the centre of the hay. A crowd gathered round and stopped the astonished carter, and demanded why he was carrying a fellow-creature in his hay. The complaints and cries of the smothered man now became painful, and there was every reason to believe that he was dying. The crowd, regardless of the stoppage to the traffic, instantly proceeded to unload the hay into the street. The smothered voice urged them to make haste; but the feelings of the people may be imagined when the cart was empty and nobody was found, while Alexandre and his friend walked off laughing at the unexpected results of their trick.

The individual who wishes to know anything about this wonderful art must learn to distinguish distances, and be able, by giving the proper pitch to the voice, to make it reach exactly to the point indicated. He must also know that the attention of the audience should be directed either by the eyes or a gesture of the hand to the spot whence the voice is supposed to issue. In order to cover the features of any modern ventriloquial entertainment, I will here give the rules for the two voices required, with an example of the dialogue in each case.

VOICE I.

The first is the voice in which Frederic Maccabe excelled. To acquire this voice, speak one word or sentence in your own natural tones; then open the mouth and fix the jaws fast, as though you were trying to hinder anyone from opening them farther, or shutting them; draw the tongue back in a ball; speak the same words, and the sound, instead of being formed in the mouth will be formed in the pharynx. Great attention must be paid to holding the jaws rigid. The sound will then be found to imitate a voice heard from the other side of a door when it is closed, or under a floor, or through a wall. To ventriloquize with this voice, let the operator stand with his back to the audience against a door. Give a gentle tap at the door, and call aloud in a natural voice, inquiring, "Who is there?" This will have the effect of drawing the attention of the audience to the person supposed to be outside. Then fix the jaw as described, and utter in voice No. 1 (explained above) any words you please, such as, "I want to come in." Ask questions in the natural voice and answer in the other. When you have done this, open the door a little, and hold a conversation with the imaginary person. As the door is now open, it is obvious that the voice must be altered, for a voice will not sound to the ear when a door is open the same as when closed. Therefore, the voice must be made to appear face to face, or close to the ventriloquist. To do this the voice must be altered from the original note or pitch, but be made in another part of the mouth. This is done by closing the lips tight and drawing one corner of the mouth downwards, or towards the ear. Then let the lips open at that corner only, the other part to remain closed.

Next breathe, as it were, the words out of the orifice formed. Do not speak distinctly, but expel the breath in short puffs at each word, and as loud as possible. By so doing you will cause the illusion in the mind of the listeners, that they hear the same voice which they heard when the door was closed, but which is now heard more distinctly and nearer, on account of the door being open. This voice must always be used when the ventriloquist wishes it to appear that the sound comes from some one close at hand, but through an obstacle. The description of voice and dialogue may be varied, as in the following example: —

THE SUFFOCATED VICTIM.

A large box or close cupboard is used indiscriminately, as it may be handy. The student will rap or kick the box apparently by accident. The voice will then utter a hoarse and subdued groan, apparently from the box or closet.

Student (pointing to the box with an air of astonishment): What is that?

Voice: I won't do so any more. I am nearly dead.

Student: Who are you? How came you there?

Voice: I only wanted to see what was going on. Let me out, do.

Student: But I don't know who you are.

Voice: Oh yes, you do.

Student: Who are you?

Voice: Your old schoolfellow, Tom ———. You know me.

Student: Why, he's in Canada.

Voice (sharply): No he ain't, he's here; but be quick.

Student (opening the lid): Perhaps he's come by the underground railroad? Hallo!

Voice (not so muffled, as described in directions: Now then, give us a hand.

Student (closing the lid or door sharply): No, I won't.

Voice (as before): Have pity (Tom, or Jack, or Mr. ——. as the case may be), or I shall be choked.

Student: I don't believe you are what you say.

Voice: Why don't you let me out and see before I am dead?

Student (opening and shutting the lid and varying the voice accordingly): Dead! not you. When did you leave Canada?

Voice: Last week. Oh! I am choking.

Student: Shall I let him out? (opening the door.) There's no one here.

VOICE II.

The second voice is the more easy to be acquired. It is the voice by which all ventriloquists make a supposed person speak from a long distance, or from, or through the ceiling. In the first place, with your back to the audience, direct their attention to the ceiling by pointing to it or by looking intently at it. Call loudly, and ask some question, as though you believed some person to be concealed there. Make your own voice very distinct, and as near the lips as possible, inasmuch as that will help the illusion. Then in exactly the same tone and pitch answer; but, in order that the same voice may seem to proceed from the point indicated, the words must be formed at the back part of the roof of the mouth. To do this the lower jaw must be drawn back and held there, the mouth open, which will cause the palate to be elevated and drawn

nearer to the pharynx, and the sound will be reflected in that cavity, and appear to come from the roof. Too much attention cannot be paid to the manner in which the breath is used in this voice. When speaking to the supposed person, expel the words with a deep, quick breath.

When answering in the imitative manner, the breath must be held back and expelled very slowly, and the voice will come in a subdued and muffled manner, little above a whisper, but so as to be well distinguished. To cause the supposed voice to come nearer by degrees, call loudly, and say, "I want you down here," or words to that effect. At the same time make a motion downwards with your hand. Hold some conversation with the voice and cause it to say, "I am coming," or "Here I am," each time indicating the descent with the hand. When the voice is supposed to approach nearer, the sound must alter, to denote the progress of the movement. Therefore let the voice at every supposed step, roll, as it were, by degrees, from the pharynx more into the cavity of the mouth, and at each supposed step, contracting the opening of the mouth, until the lips are drawn up as if you were whistling. By so doing the cavity of the mouth will be very much enlarged. This will cause the voice to be obscured, and so appear to come nearer by degrees. At the same time, care must be taken not to articulate the consonant sounds plainly, as that would cause the disarrangement of the lips and cavity of the mouth; and in all imitative voices the consonants must scarcely be articulated at all, especially if the ventriloquist faces the audience. For example: suppose the imitative voice is made to say, "Mind what you are doing, you bad boy," it must be spoken, as if it were written, "'ind 'ot you're doing, you 'ad

whoy." This kind of articulation may be practised by forming the words in the pharynx, and then sending them out of the mouth by sudden expulsions of the breath clean from the lungs at every word. This is most useful in ventriloquism, and to illustrate it we will take the man on the roof as an illustration. This is an example almost invariably successful, and is constantly used by skilled professors of the art. As we have before repeatedly intimated, the eyes and attention of the audience must be directed to the supposed spot from whence the illusive voice is supposed to proceed: —

Student: Are you up there, Jem?

Voice: Hallo! who's that?

Student: It's I! Are you nearly finished?

Voice: Only three more slates to put on, master.

Student: I want you here, Jem.

Voice: I am coming directly.

Student: Which way, Jem?

Voice: Over the roof and down the trap. (Voice is supposed to be moving, as the student turns and points with his finger.)

Student: Which way?

Voice (nearer): Through the trap and down the stairs.

Student: How long shall you be?

Voice: Only a few minutes. I am coming as fast as I can.

The voice now approaches the door, and is taken up by the same tone, but produced as in the first voice.

* * * * *

I have room to add only a few polyphonic imitations. To imitate the tormenting bee, the student must use considerable pressure on his chest, as if he was about to groan suddenly, but instead of which, the

sound must be confined and prolonged in the throat: the greater the pressure, the higher will be the faint note produced, and which will perfectly resemble the buzzing of the bee or wasp. Now, to imitate the buzzing of a bluebottle fly, it will be necessary for the sound to be made with the lips instead of the throat; this is done by closing the lips very tight, except at one corner, where a small aperture is left; fill that cheek full of wind, but not the other, then slowly blow or force the wind contained in the cheek out of the aperture: if this is done properly, it will cause a sound exactly like the buzzing of a bluebottle fly.

The noise caused by planing and sawing wood can also be imitated without much difficulty, and it causes a great deal of amusement. The student must, however, bear in mind that every action must be *imitated* as well as the noise, for the eye assists to delude the ear. We have even seen ventriloquists carry this eye deception so far as to have a few shavings to scatter as they proceed, and a piece of wood to fall when the sawing is ended. To imitate planing, the student must stand at a table a little distance from the audience, and appear to take hold of a plane and push it forward: the sound as of a plane is made as though you were dwelling on the last part of the word hus*h* — dwell upon the *sh* a little, as *tsh*, and then clip it short by causing the tongue to close with the palate, then over again. Letters will not convey the peculiar sound of sawing — it must be studied from nature.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"ON THE ROAD."

Theatrical life is full enough of business and bustle, even when a company is playing a long engagement in a large city; but when "on the road," travelling from town to town — playing here a week and there a week, with one-night stands in the intervening "villages," actors and managers find it no easy task to retain their health and spirits, and keep up with their "dates;" and with all but a few organizations located almost permanently in New York, thus flitting from place to place — a round of anxiety and railroad experiences that lasts through forty weeks of each year — makes up the easy, glorious, and blissful existence that so many people outside of the profession imagine is the unalloyed portion of those who are in it.

As much of the business of a company's season as can be arranged in New York during the summer, is attended to by the manager. He meets the prominent theatrical managers of the country on "The Square" and makes dates at their respective houses for his attraction. Having located his route as to the large cities he proceeds to fill in the intervals with one or two-night stands in smaller places, and this being done he and his company are ready to take the road just as soon as the season begins. The contracts for cities like Chicago, Cincinnati, Louisville, New Orleans, and St. Louis are made and signed in New York during

the summer vacation. The others are completed while the company is on the road.

Ahead of every attraction is a press agent, herald, avant-courier, or, as he began to call himself two years ago, a business manager. When he invades a town the first place he makes a rush for is the most available opera house or hall, with the proprietor of which he makes a contract like the following: —

BELLEVILLE, ILL.....1882.

This is to certify that I have rented the hall (room or theatre) known as.....to the Madison Square Theatre Company for.....night....., viz.....for the sum of..... dollars per night, which includes license, stage hands, ushers, ticket-seller, etc. Said hall, passage-way, and stage to be well lighted, and also to be kept clean and well warmed, with services of janitor and privilege of matinee included.

Signed:

.....Lessee.

Witness:

.....Business Manager.

Numerous other contracts are made, — for hauling baggage, for carriages and omnibus, for orchestra, etc. The hotel contract, which is as follows, is very explicit: —

"This is to certify that the landlord of..... .....does hereby agree with the Agent of the Madison Square Theatre Company to board and lodge the said company, consisting of.....persons, more or less, for.....days, more or less, at the rate of.....cents per day for each person. Three meals and one (night's) lodging to constitute a day's

board, and for any time less than one day the charge shall be at the same rate per diem as is above mentioned. Fires to be furnished at.....cents per each room. No charge to be made under the above agreement providing the party see fit to go elsewhere. Agent to be kept at same rates.

.....Landlord."

Having got through with making contracts the agent begins to "bill the town." The amount of billing that is done depends largely upon the reputation of the star or attraction, and the manner in which the newspapers have been worked. An actress like Mary Anderson puts out but about one hundred three-sheet bills — a three-sheet bill being the ordinary poster that is seen upon a single bill-board — in any of the large cities. Sarah Bernhardt and Adelina Patti, who were kept before the public by the press for many months before they came to this country, needed but a few three-sheet bills and a simple announcement of their coming in the newspapers. Mrs. Langtry, Christine Nilsson, and Henry Irving will be billed in the same economical way when they reach our shores. Edwin Booth and John McCullough, like Mary Anderson, use only a small quantity of three-sheet bills for advertising on the walls. These people require few lithographs, and are likewise fortunate in not being required to buy large space in the papers. Nearly all the minor melodramatic and comedy attractions take to the circus style of advertising. Charles L. Davis, of "Alvin Joslyn" fame, who wears the largest diamond and carries the finest watch in the profession, boasts that he always likes to bill against a circus. When he was in St. Louis during the season of 1881–2, Mr. W. R. Cottrell, the city bill-poster, told me that Davis

put out about four thousand sheets, and everlastingly sprinkled the windows with colored lithographs. Mr. Cottrell also told me that this does not approach the lavishness of circuses in decorating the fences and walls and bill-boards of cities. These latter usually put out not less than ten thousand sheets, and the Great London Show a few seasons ago would spread from eighteen to twenty thousand sheets before the eyes of a city having a population of four hundred thousand. The bill-poster gets three cents per sheet for posting, and $1 per hundred for distributing lithographs, so that, as will be understood, a circus or a theatrical attraction like Charles L. Davis is a bonanza to the bill-poster.

From the big type of the bill-boards the advance agent naturally turns his attention to the smaller, but probably more effective, type of the newspaper. He rushes into the editorial rooms like a whirlwind, if he is a cyclonic agent, asks in a voice of thunder for the dramatic critic, and when that gentleman is pointed out, after depositing a gilt-edged card and bestrewing the journalist's desk with a mass of notices from the Oakland *Bugle*, the Bragtown *Boomerang*, and forty other equally important and severely critical journals, proceeds to talk so loudly that he disturbs all the writers in the room, and has the managing editor on the point nineteen times out of twenty of ordering him out of the office.

"I tell you what, my boy," he shouts, "we just laid 'em out cold in Pilot Knob last night. Just got a telegram from the manager. See here: 'House jammed to the doors; hundreds turned away; great enthusiasm; big sales to-morrow night.' Now that's no gag, but the dead square, bang-up truth, s'elp me God."

"I see the Horse-Tail Bar *Sentinel* gives you folks fits," the dramatic critic quietly suggests. "It says your play is bad and your company worse — how is that?"

"Oh that fellow is a bloody duffer," the agent replies at the top of his voice. "Tell you the truth, we had a little trouble with him about comps. He wanted a bushel of 'em, and because we wouldn't give 'em up blasted us. But we did a rattling good business all the same, and don't you forget it?"

And in this way the cyclonic agent rattles along, tormenting everybody within hearing distance until he gets ready to go; and when he is gone there is a sigh of relief all around the office. The managing editor comes out and asks the dramatic critic: —

"Who was that d—d fool?"

"The agent of the Doorstep Comic Opera Company," the dramatic critic replies.

"Well, the next time he comes in here just tell him this is not a deaf and dumb asylum. We don't want any serenades from side-show blowers. Don't give his d—d old company more than two lines, and make it less than that if you can."

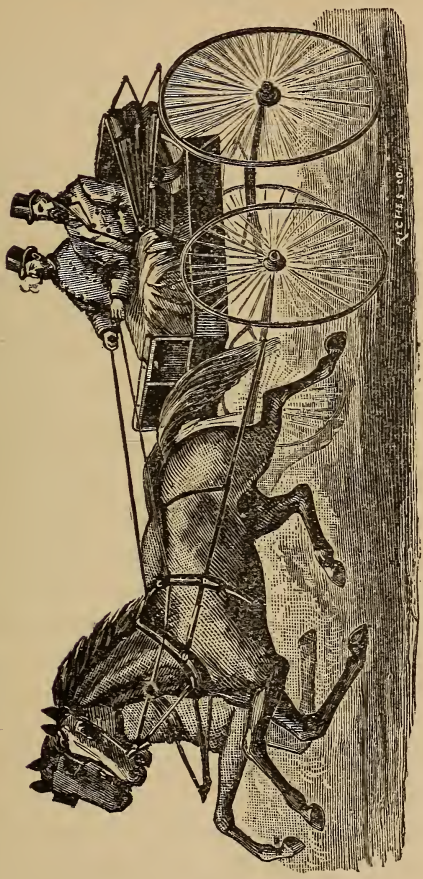
Fortunately for the profession this style of advance agent is dying out, and men who understand newspapers better are coming in. There are many real gentlemen, clever, quiet and effective, in the business, like Mr. E. D. Price, formerly of the Detroit *Post and Tribune;* Frank Farrell, who graduated from the New Orleans *Times* office, and others who have forsaken journalism for the equally arduous, but more lucrative positions that enterprising and long-headed theatrical managers offer them.

The advance agent sees that the hall or theatre is in proper condition, looks after the sale of reserved seats,

distributes his "comps" as judiciously as circumstances will allow, and confronts everywhere he goes the cunning and omnipresent dead-head — that abomination of the show business who will spend $5 with an agent to get a free ticket from him, when admission and a reserved seat may be purchased for $1. If the dead-head fails to circumvent the agent he quietly awaits the coming of the company, when he lies in ambush for the manager, of whom he demands a pass or his life. In fact, the manager often has to undo a great deal that his agent has done in a town, and to do over again much that the avant-courier had seemingly done in a satisfactory manner. The company, too, frequently find the way not so smooth or pleasant as the agent has represented it to be: the hall or theatre in which the performance is to be given is often a dingy, dismal place that is not only without conveniences of any kind, but what is worse, may not be proof against anything like demonstrative weather; the hotel fare is bad, and the accommodations no better; the mayor, the town council, and sometimes the prominent citizens, must have free passes; the local papers want hatfuls of complimentary tickets, and with a house half filled with dead-heads and one-third of the benches empty, they must, in the face of most discouraging circumstances, appear as entertainers or meet with the severest denunciations of the pigmy press and the most galling criticism from the ungrateful army of dead-heads.

Now and then an actor or an actress contracts a cold during a barn-storming tour, and the nomadic life not being calculated to aid the healing power of medicines, the seeds of death are sown, and soon the played-out player sinks from sight, and without causing a single ripple upon the surface of the great sea of life, goes

down to the grave. The agent and the manager, too, share this danger, and altogether the life of profes-



"ON THE ROAD."

sional people when "on the road" is not so bright or joyful as to cause any one acquainted with their trials and troubles to envy them their lot.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE GREEN-EYED AND OTHER MONSTERS.

To the outside world the player's life seems always bright — a rose-carpeted path with sunshine forever straying about the feet and breath of the sweetest gardens always in their atmosphere. To the players themselves, notwithstanding the hard work, it has the same beauty and fascinations that other professions have for those who have entered them. Lotta receiving the wild plaudits of her newsboy admirers — for all over the country the street Arabs express their willingness to "do ennythin' in de world fur Lottie" — accepting the baskets of flowers they send her with the pennies they have pooled, and doing her utmost to respond to a score of encores in response to their appeals is as charming a little picture of perfect happiness and contentment as we could find anywhere. Judic, the great opera bouffe singer, peddling cherries, at the great charity fair in Paris, from two panniers borne by a jackass, crying, "Buy my cherries, monsieur. I don't sell them dear. Five francs, the little basket," is a noble example of the generosity that distinguishes the profession of which she is a member. A popular American actress selling photographs for a little cripple she met in the street, and who had been rebuffed at several, is another example of the leaning towards charity and the kind-heartedness of a class of people against whom many bigots raise their hands and to whom they turn their backs, saying, as the Rev. Mr.

Sabini said, that he didn't want to have anything to do with actors. The reader has probably heard the story, but I will repeat it here: George Holland, the actor, died in his eightieth year, on December 20, 1870. He was a player of exceeding merit in his day, and his demise was widely and deeply regretted. Friends gathered around his casket in the awful moment when they were to part with him forever. The rites of the church were wanted for him, of course, and an actor friend went to Rev. Sabini and asked him to officiate. He declined, saying: "I want to have nothing to do with an actor. There is a little place around the corner were they do these things." And sure enough there was, and the actors took their dead friend into "the little place around the corner," and Dr. Houghton said the last prayer over the dead player. That "place" is now known among actors and by the public too as "the little church around the corner." It is the Church of the Transfiguration, and is on Twenty-ninth Street near Madison Avenue.

It is only occasionally that scandal is given by the theatrical profession, but these few and far-between occasions are sufficient to keep alive the bad opinion that certain people have of actors and actresses. It is true the class is weak at many points, as are other classes, but as I have urged before, they maintain a higher standard of morality and adorn their circle better than any other people whose paths are strewn as plentifully with temptations. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the stage was in very bad condition because society was in a worse condition, and if there is frailty in the ranks of actresses of to-day, and weaknesses among actors, it is because their surroundings compel them to be what they are, and even under this compulsion they can hold their heads

as high as their neighbors and look them in the face without feeling that they are any worse than the rest of the world, even if they are so bad. It is my purpose to say something about the dark side of theatrical life that the reader may see just what there is in the talk indulged by the scandal-mongers of the anti-theatrical class, and that it may be known that their indiscretions and their sins are no more heinous than the sins and transgressions of other people, and that in very few instances are they the outcome of the actor or actress's professional surroundings.

The estrangement of Edwin Booth and his wife or the divorce of Edwin Forrest from his wife did not cause the world to think any the less of these gentlemen as actors, and the events did not bring any opprobrium upon the profession. Sarah Bernhardt's open avowal that her children were fatherless and they were only "accidents" was a frank confession of an early indiscretion that almost everybody was ready to forgive. She was not received by society in this country, but society knelt before her at the shrine of Thespis, as they did at the feet of Mme. Patti, who flaunted Nicolini in the face of the public, as the successor of the Marquis de Caux in all the rights of a husband although there never had been any marriage ceremony to make the tenor the legal companion of the beautiful diva. For the sake of their art the sins of these two gifted women were partially forgotten, and while society could not open its doors to Mdlle. Bernhardt or Mme. Patti, it went readily to the open doors through which the presence of the actress and of the songstress was to be reached.

A New York correspondent says: "Having mentioned two French actresses, let me drop into the true story of Bernhardt and Colombier's quarrel, and the

book about America which has been put forth in Colombier's name. When Bernhardt came over here, she was accompanied by Jehan Soudan, a Parisian writer. He was very small, closely buttoned up to the neck, very bushy haired, and very much like a particularly mild and girlish divinity student. For all that, he was the accredited temporary lover of Bernhardt. His other errand was to write an account of her tour, to be published as from her own pen. While in this city he was an object of considerable ridicule, and his name was maltreated from Jehan Soudan into Sudden Johnny. But Colombier, the fair and fat actress of Bernhardt's company, did not regard him as comic. Quite on the contrary, she fell in love with him, and he fell in love with her. However, this new reciprocity of hearts was kept hidden until near the end of the journey. Then it came out through Sudden Johnny carelessly kissing Colombier too loud in a thin-partitioned dressing-room. The smack was heard by Bernhardt. I don't imagine that she cared much for Johnny, or would have missed him from the ranks of her favored admirers; but it made her just as mad as she could be to lose him to Colombier. Now, Colombier's beauty was marred by a deflection of her nose to one side. That's not much, for the chances are ten to one that the sides of your own face don't exactly agree. Try a glass critically, and see. Well, when Colombier emerged from her room with Johnny, to go on the stage, Sarah regarded her quizzically, and then said something in French equivalent to: —

"'Ah, my dear, I fear you kiss too much on one side of your mouth. It has really and truly bent your nose awry. Do let the other side have some of Jehan's attention.'

"No more was said. But that Johnny and Colom-

bier plotted a deep revenge is evident, for the book appears in Paris with the name of Colombier instead of Bernhardt as author, and among its numerous ridiculous lies about Americans are some spiteful little flings at Sarah. Thus Sudden Johnny gets even."

Mme. Patti, too, had a young man with her — Michael Mortier, brother of the editor of the Paris *Figaro* — who was to write a book for her, but in St. Louis he spoke two freely to a newspaper reporter about Mme. Patti's relations to Nicolini, and Mortier's life was thereafter made so miserable that he was glad soon to make a bee line for Paris, where it is to be hoped he is at present.

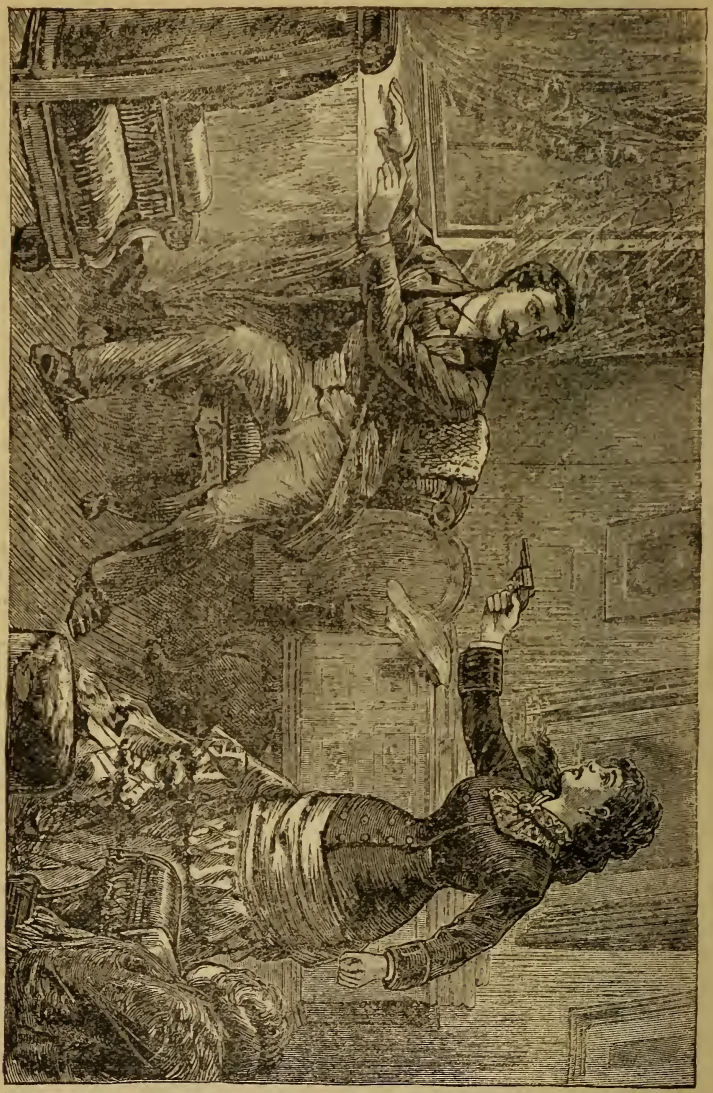
A London correspondent tells us how a favorite actress of that place faced three husbands, and as it is in order to continue turning the crank of the scandal machine while foreign talent is the material to be ground, I will give the paragraph. He says: "The true glory of the Lyceum Theatre is that English Bernhardt, Miss Ellen Terry. This blue-eyed, blonde-locked, Saxon siren is not a radiant beauty as was the ill-fated Adelaide Neilson, but she is something better — she is a charmeuse, as the French call any one possessing that peculiar feminine — which she exercises so powerfuly — magnetism. She is the most gifted, and withal the most naturally graceful, woman that I have ever seen. The little movements and artistic attitudes of Sarah Bernhardt would seem forced and artificial beside that unborn charm and harmony of gesture, unstudied and perfect as the ripple of tall grasses or the swaying of the branches of a weeping willow beneath a summer breeze. She is pure womanly, every inch of her. She cannot be awkward even when she tries; and I saw her try the other night in 'The Belle's Stratagem;' but instead of transform-

ing *Letitia Handy* into a country hoyden in accordance with the text, she only succeeded in assuming a pretty *espieglerie* that, had I been *Doricourt*, would have driven me to catch her straightway in my arms and kiss her, declaring that she was charming anyhow. Off the stage I am told that she is quite as fascinating as when before the foot-lights. She has proved the extent of her power of enchantment by successfully winning and wedding three husbands, all of whom are still living, divorce and not death having released her from two of them. In fact, it is reported that while walking in the Grosvenor Gallery recently, with her present spouse, Mr. Kelly, she came face to face with her two former husbands, who were promenading there together, and that the only embarrassed personage of the quartette was Mr. Kelly ; and they do say that the law will soon be called into requisition to break the bonds that unite her to her present spouse, and that she will then become the wife of a prominent English actor. Truly this wonderful and interesting lady ought to inscribe on her wedding-ring the motto said to have been adopted by the old Countess of Desmond on the occasion of her fourth marriage : —

If I survive
I'll have five.

Jealousy is at the bottom of nearly every scandal connected with the stage, or with people who have been on the stage. The story of Lizzie McCall's crime is a peculiarly sad one. She had been a favorite burlesque actress, and was playing young heroines with Boucicault in 1880 when she met and married George Barry Wall, a young man of twenty-five years, she being twenty-three. She promised him to leave the stage forever, and in order that she might not be

placed in the way of temptation Wall made his home



THE M'CALL TRAGEDY.

in New Utrecht, Long Island, removing thence to New York. Jealousy early made its appearance in their

home, and their married life was not happy or peaceful. They lived together for eighteen months, however, until one fine morning after a violent quarrel she snatched up a pistol and shot her husband through the throat.

A Russian theatre not long since was the scene of a real drama which deserves a place among the serious accidents of the stage. The two leading actresses were Frenchwomen who had come to St. Petersburg together as friends. They had occupied the same house, and lived on terms of the warmest intimacy for some time. Then a young swell, who had enrolled himself among the admirers of one of them, began to pay court to the other. The consequence was a jealousy which finally led to a separation of the whilom friends. They remained members of the same company, however, and their jealousies found vent about the theatre. One night after a dinner washed down with much champagne, the jilted actress became very violent, and attempted to assault her rival in her dressing-room. She was prevented, and went off threatening vengeance. The course of the piece brought them together in an impassioned scene, in the conclusion of which the one had to warn the other off with a dagger. Heated with wine, her jealousy inflamed by the presence of her faithless lover in a stage box, the jilted artiste lost control of herself, and instead of a warning, dealt her rival a stab. The wounded woman fell bleeding to the stage. Fortunately she was not fatally hurt, and her assailant escaped with an authoritative order to leave Russia, and stay away.

Miss Bertha Welby, who is a popular and talented actress, was a member of the "Only a Farmer's Daughter" company, of which Miss Lilian Cleves was the star. The two ladies could not get along

together. Miss Welby insisted that Miss Cleves was jealous of her rival's success; and so it went on, until at last a low ruffian visited Miss Welby in her dressing-room one night, after the performance, and demanded money from her for having applauded her in several towns. She was afraid of the fellow, she said, and so paid him the sum he asked — $15. She then told him to go, and he went; but Miss Cleves, it

BLACKMAILING AN ACTRESS.

appears, had assembled the members of the company at the door of the dressing-room to witness the payment of the man, who, as she declared, had led the claque that was making Miss Welby a greater actress than the star. Miss Welby asserted that the whole thing was a piece of blackmail, and that Miss Cleves had instigated it.

Operatic stars are violent sometimes in these exhibitions of jealousy. It will be remembered that at the last Cincinnati music festival, Gerster absolutely re-

fused to sing if Miss Cary preceded her, and the Hungarian prima donna was induced to appear only by the graceful withdrawal of the fair American songstress. Miss Kellogg and Mlle. Roze had a bitter war in St. Louis in 1879, on account of their dressing-rooms, the American prima donna insisting on having the best the Grand Opera House afforded. She got it at last, and was shocked when she heard a story to the effect that Wakefield, then one of the proprietors, had a peep-hole above the dressing-room which he not only made use of himself but invited his friends to use.

The jealousy of Mrs. McKee Rankin (Kitty Blanchard) has more than once been made the subject of newspaper articles. She thought her robust husband went through the love scene with the *Widow* (Miss Eva Randolph) in the play with too lavish a display of affection, and the green-eyed monster took possession of her. She stood in the wings every night and watched the scene, and the more she watched it the madder she got until at last she demanded from her husband that Miss Randolph be dismissed. This Mr. Rankin sternly refused to do. Then Mrs. Rankin refused to play, and a clever young lady was given the part of *Billy Piper*. The newspapers praised the new *Billy* so highly that Mrs. Rankin hurried back to resume the part, but remained cold toward and entirely estranged from her husband. After some time the wound was healed and the couple reunited. There were several split-ups of this kind, but Mr. and Mrs. Rankin are now living happily together, and it is to be hoped that the success of their new play, "49," will keep them happy forever.

Now and then the jealous actress's feelings are expressed in a rather ridiculous manner. During the run of a spectacular play in one of the large cities one of

those old chaps who like to linger behind the scenes and tickle the fairies under the chin succeeded in making himslf the admirer of one of the ladies — one who played a prince or something of that kind. He brought her flowers every night, took her to supper

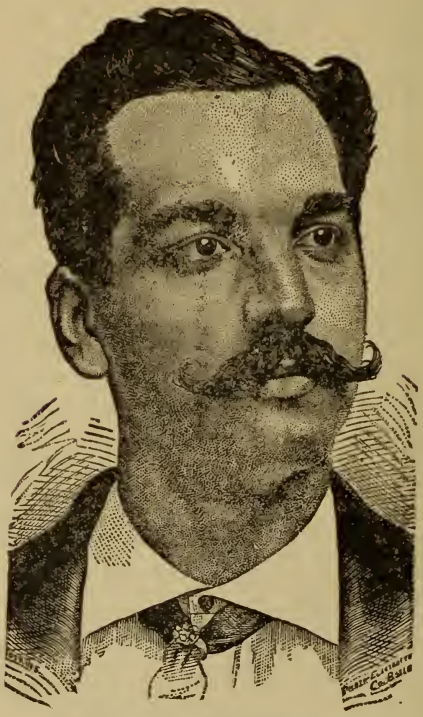
JEALOUSY.

after the play, and often paid for a ride under the starry night at a time when he should have been resting his hoary head upon his pillow at home. He kept this up for a while; then he suddenly turned his attention to another girl, who was doing a skipping-rope

dance during an interval in the play. He began to bring her flowers and to feed her on midnight oysters, and to take her on moonlight rides. The pretty prince stood it as long as she could; then she made up her mind to be revenged on the old deceiver. She waited one night until she saw him talking to the skipping-rope dancer, when she picked up a broom, and stealing to the opposite side of the scene, made a high hit at his plug hat, just as he was presenting the rival a bouquet, and knocked the piece of head-gear clear into the outfield. The ancient Lothario felt around among the few hairs on the top of his head to see whether a piece of skull had not been chipped off; the skipping-rope dancer laughed; the pretty prince hauled off and was about to bat the bouquet to second base when the dancer danced, and what remained to do was to advise the "old gray" to go, which he did rapidly after regaining possession of his battered hat. He was advised that if he returned any more the broom would be used upon himself instead of his hat; and the scenes that he had haunted so long knew him no more after that night.

A New York wife wondered for a long time where her husband went at night. At least she learned that he haunted a down-town theatre. She knew her husband was very fond of the drama, but was astonished when she found out that he was patronizing the play without taking her along, so she dressed up one evening and going up to the box-office, asked the young man whose smiling face shone through the window, if Mr. So-and-So was there? Now she had gone to the right source for her information. Mr. So-and-So had taken away the affections of one of the actresses from the man in the box-office; therefore the man in the box-office manfully replied that Mr. So-and-So was back in Miss

Whatdyecaller's dressing-room. Would the man in the box-office be kind enough to show Mr. So-and-So's wife where the dressing-room was? He would, most gladly. Calling his assistant to the window the treasurer took the lady in through the stage entrance



EDWARD KENDALL.

and pointed out the dressing-room. Sure enough there was Mr. So-and-So in very close relation and very close conversation with Miss Whatdyecaller, who being a ballet girl, in the act of getting herself into

her gauze and spangles, had little else on than her tights. The husband was astounded; the wife was boiling over with rage; the dancer did not know what to make of it. The husband said that there was blood in his spouse's eye and fled the scene. Mrs. So-and-So then turned her attention to the lady in summer costume, and there was a war of words that ended in the actress snapping her fingers in the wife's face, while the latter, unable to do or say anything in her rage, strutted out after her faithless lord and master, who was afraid to return home for three days, and did not return until he saw a "personal" in the *Herald* saying that all would be forgiven and no questions asked.

The meanest trick, I think, that was ever prompted by jealousy was one in which a well-known comedian and a handsome juvenile lady were made the victims. Having determined to go to a fancy dress ball, they borrowed a Mephistopheles and Venus costume, and having dressed at the theatre in which they were playing, took their clothes to their boarding-house, the comedian retaining only his ulster and the young lady only her silk fur-lined cloak. In the same house the leading lady roomed, and as the comedian had been somewhat attentive to her she grew jealous when she saw him escorting the other flame to the ball, and that both might be taught a lesson she resolved upon a plan of action which she faithfully carried out. The comedian and his companion had plenty of fun at the ball. They returned to their boarding-house about three A. M. Both had latch-keys, but they wouldn't work. Somebody had fastened down the bolt. What were they to do? It was a cold morning with snow on the ground and snow still falling. Their carriage had gone; they didn't wish to go to a hotel in masquerade

OUT IN THE COLD.

style, so they resolved to stick it out until the door would be opened. And they did so. The comedian

wrapped his ulster around him and sat down on the doorstep; the young lady gathered her cloak around her as tightly as she could and stood up in a corner of the entrance, shivering and wondering what the people thought who passed by and looked at them. They remained there three hours, and when the door was opened, it was the leading lady who did the opening. She laughed as if she would lose her life in the effort when she saw the plight the two were in, and said as they passed up the hall that she was sorry she had put down that bolt when she came home, but she thought they were both in the house.

The story of an actor's jealousy is nicely told by a New York paper in the following: A handsome young actress attached regularly to one of the New York theatres has a husband and a baby, a sickly little thing, and the husband is outrageously jealous, all the more that this season he has done "job work," which has kept him "on the road" pretty constantly. Lately he "came in," the "combination" with which he was connected having "gone up." He arrived unexpectedly late one afternoon, and found his wife out. On the table lay a note addressed to her in a masculine hand. It was open and ran thus: —

"Dear Friend: I do not think you have any cause to be anxious about the baby. It is only cutting its teeth a little hard — that's all. However, as you desire it, and say it would relieve your mind while you are away at the theatre, I will come to-night about nine and stay all night with you. Don't speak of the trouble. I shall only be too glad to let you get a little sleep after being up so much with baby.

Your true friend, K. S. Stanton, M. D."

The husband was furious at this note, seemingly so

harmless. He thrust it into his pocket, and without waiting to see his wife strode from the house. He had now, he thought, what he had long suspected, proof of his wife's infidelity. Why, it was shamless! Dr. Staunton would pass the night, would he, and blame it on the baby! but he should find that there was a husband around ready to deal terrible vengeance upon the betrayer. His feelings were not pleasant ones, as he lay perdue the rest of the day, nursing his wrath, to keep it warm. When the pretty young actress came home she was told that a gentleman had called and gone away in a great hurry, leaving no name. At about half-past ten that evening, while she was at the theatre, the door of her bed-room was dragged open furiously, and the enraged husband rnshed in. He looked around under the bed and into the closets, but found no man.

There were, however, two persons in the room. One an infant slumbering peacefully in the crib, the other a lady sitting at a small table on which lay several little bits of white paper into which she was pouring some globules from a tiny bottle. Her eyes were blue, her complexion a pure pink and white, and her hair, curling in loose ringlets over her well-formed head, was just touched with gray. She looked up astonished and said: —

"Don't make such a noise; you'll wake the child. Are you a burglar or what do you want?"

The husband paused in his fruitless search and replied: "I want that man."

"What man?"

"The man that's made an appointment with my wife for to-night."

"Who is your wife and what business have you in Miss ——'s bed-room?" asked the lady.

"Miss ——'s my wife."

"Indeed; well, you can't make me believe that she ever made any appointment with any man she oughtn't to make."

"I can't, can't I? read that then," he said, throwing the letter on the table and scattering the medicine. The lady read the letter and began to laugh, which enraged the husband still more.

"Where have you hidden this Dr. Stanton? I will blow his brains out," he cried.

"No, you won't."

"You see if I don't."

"Well, blow then: I am Dr. Stanton, the author of that letter," said the lady.

She had to sign her name, Kate S. Stanton, and show him that the writing was the same as in the note, before he would be convinced, and then he was the most sheepish-looking man in New York The story got out, and he was the butt of every actor in the city. They refused to believe that he "walked home." They condoled with him on account of his ill health, which forced him to stop acting. They recommended him to consult a doctor, especially a lady doctor, Kate Stanton, for example. Altogether he was so "roasted" that he will have to have more than a mere letter in future to make him thirst for vengeance.

"Hang these women doctors!" is all you can get him to say; "if they must be doctors, why can't they sign their full name, and not make trouble between man and wife?"

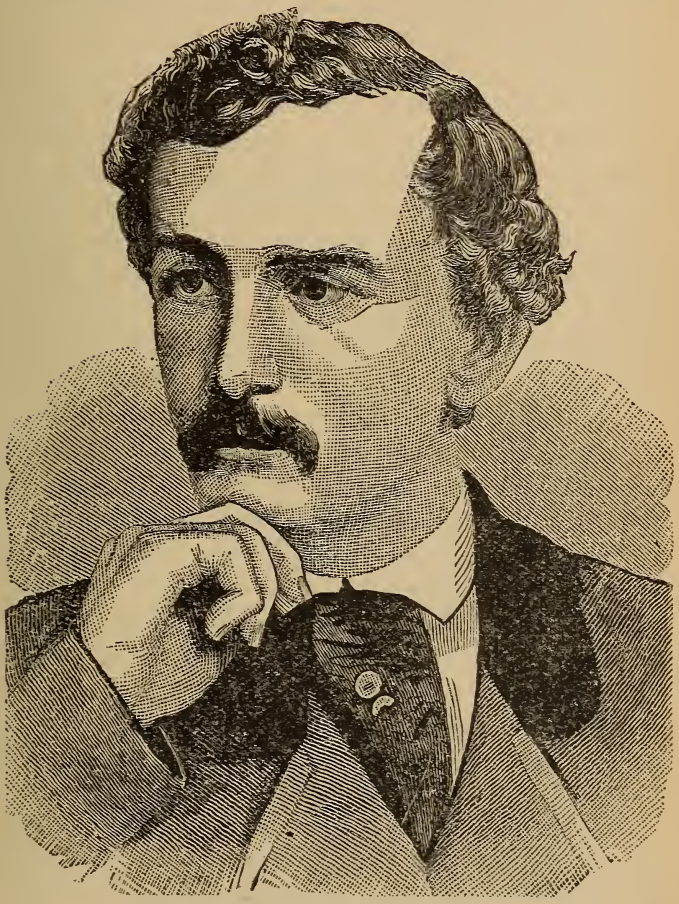
CHAPTER XXXV.

JOHN WILKES BOOTH, PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ASSASSIN.

An interview with an old stager was published a few months ago in the New York *Dramatic News*, which furnishes some new ideas about John Wilkes Booth, brother of the illustrious Edwin, and the terrible crime with which he shook a nation to its centre. John Wilkes Booth, it will be remembered, was the man who shot and killed President Lincoln, while the latter was witnessing a performance of "Our American Cousin," at Ford's Theatre, Washington, D. C., on the night of April 14, 1865. Laura Keene was on the stage at the time. Wilkes Booth entered the President's box and shot him in the back of the head. He then made his escape by leaping from the box to the stage, and running thence through the stage entrance to the street, where he leaped on a horse in waiting for him. As he sprang from the box, his foot caught in the American flag which was draped around the railing, and he fell, spraining his ankle. Landing on the stage, he jumped up, and waving a dagger over his head, he shouted, "*Sic semper tyrannis.*" He was subsequently shot by Sergeant Corbett, while attempting to escape from a barn in which he had sought refuge.

Said a veteran actor, referring back a score of years, to Wilkes Booth's opening at Wallack's old theatre, on Broadway, near Broome Street: "The piece to open in was 'Richard III.' Monday morning came for rehearsal with the star, and the company

had all assembled awaiting him. Many were the stories told of his wonderful gifts and eccentricities. One old member of the company, who had played with him through Georgia, prophesied he would make



JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

a terrific hit. Said he: 'I am an old man at the business and have seen and played with some of the greatest tragedians the world has ever seen. I've

played second to Macready. I've divided the applause with Charles Kean. I've acted often with Forrest, but in all my long years of professional experience this young man Wilkes Booth (I might call him a boy), this boy is the first actor that ever (to use a professional term) knocked me off my pins, upset and completely left me without a word to say! Yes, sir, an old actor like me that you would suppose an earthquake could not move, was tongue-tied — unable to speak his lines.' 'Perhaps you never knew them,' said our saucy soubrette. The old man smiled, and then glaring at her said: 'Not know Shakespeare?' He turned from her with a contemptuous smile. 'Why, then,' said Jim Collier, 'were you so much at sea if you were so well up in the lines?' 'Wait till you see him yourself, then ask. I tell you, gentlemen, there is more magnetism in Wilkes Booth's eye than in any human being's I ever saw.' I listened to the old actor with pleasure, and set him down as an enthusiast — a not uncommon thing among some veterans of the stage, although, as a rule they are apt to carp at the present and deplore the downfall of the past. 'What do you think?' said Ed. Tilton to me. 'You know the young man's brother, Edwin, and played with the father of the boys. So have I; but don't you think our friend exaggerates a bit?' 'No, I do not,' said I, 'for I know the genius that runs in the blood of the Booth family, and have seen it crop up at times in just such a manner as he describes. The last engagement that the great Junius Brutus Booth played in San Francisco only a few weeks before his death, I was cast for *Parson Welldo* in a "New Way to Pay Old Debts." And when *Sir Giles*, hemmed in on all sides, is unable to break the combination against him, sees the parson approaching, the lion immedi-

ately becomes a lamb. His look of heavenly sweetness when I told him of the marriage of his daughter was a study; but when he learned she was wedded to his bitterest enemy, only a Dore's pencil could depict the diabolical malignity of the man. The marks of his fingers I carried upon my throat for days after, and when he shrieked in my ear with his hot breath, and the foam dropping from his lip — "tell me, devil, are they married?" I had but to reply "they are," but was unable to do so. So you see I am prepared for anything this wonderful young man may turn out to be.'

"At that moment a commotion was heard at the back of the stage, and Baker's voice was heard to say: 'Oh! not waiting long; you are on time!' And striding down the centre of the stage came the young man himself who was destined to play such an unfortunate part in the history of our country afterwards. The stage being dark at his entrance, the foot and border lights were suddenly turned up and revealed a face and form not easily described or forgotten. You have seen a high-mettled racer with his sleek skin and eye of unusual brilliancy chafing under a restless impatience to be doing something. It is the only living thing I could liken him to. After the usual introductions were over, with a sharp, jerky manner he commenced the rehearsal. I watched him closely and perceived the encomiums passed upon him by the old actor were not in the least exaggerated. Reading entirely new to us, he gave; business never thought of by the oldest stager, he introduced; and, when the rehearsal was over, one and all admitted a great actor was amongst us. Knowing his own powers, he was very particular in telling those around him not to be af-

frighted at night, as he might (he said, with a smile) throw a little more fire into the part than at rehearsal. *Lady Anne* (Miss Gray) was gently admonished; *Richmond*, who was Jim Collier, was bluntly told to look out in the combat scene. Jim, who was (and probably is now) something of an athlete, smiled a sickly smile at the idea of anybody getting the best of him in a combat scene, and in a sotto voice said to Jim Ward, 'Keep your eye on me to-night.'

"The evening arrived, the house was fair only, and his reception was not as warm as his merits deserved. The soliloquy over, then came the scenes with *King Henry*, and breaking loose from all the old orthodox, tie-wig business of the Richards since the days of Garrick down to Joannes, he gave such a rendition of the crook-back tyrant as was never seen before, and perhaps never will be again. Whether it was in the gentle wooing of the *Lady Anne*, the hypocrisy of the king, or the malignant joy at *Buckingham's* capture down to the fight and death of the tyrant, originality was stamped all over and through the performance. It was a terrible picture, but it had a humerous side one night. At the commencement of the combat, when *Richard*, covered with blood and the dust of the battle-field, crosses swords with *Richmond*, Collier looked defiant and almost seemed to say: 'Now, Mr. Wilkes Booth, you have been frightening everybody to-night, try it on me?' And at the lines where *Richard* says, 'A dreadful lay; here's to decide it,' the shower of blows came furious from *Richard's* sword upon the devoted earl's head. Now was Collier's turn, and bravely did he return them; with renewed strength *Richard* rained blows upon blows so fast that the athletic Jim began to wince — as much

as to say, 'How long is this going to last?' Nothing daunted, Collier with both hands clenched his powerful weapon, but it was only a feather upon Booth's sword. Jim was the first to show evidence of exhaustion, and no wonder, nothing could withstand the trip-hammer blows of that *Richard*. Watching for his head's protection, he was too unmindful of his heels, and before he was aware of it, the doughty Jim for once was discomfited — beaten; and lay upon his back in the orchestra, where the maddened Booth had driven him.

"The fight over, the curtain descended, but Booth could not rise. Many believed him dead, but no! there was the hard breathing and the glazed, open eye. Could it be possible this was the man who only a few moments before nobody could withstand in his fury; now a limp mass of exhausted nature, his nerves all unstrung, and whom a child might conquer?

"Well, the piece, as may be imagined, was a success — a positive and an unqualified success, so much so that it was kept on the balance of the week. "The Robbers" was called for rehearsal next, and as usual the war (then in progress) was the sole topic of conversation. The company was pretty evenly divided on the question, a majority of them having played throughout the South, and had the same sympathy that the merchant had who saw his trade diverted through other channels. Not a word of politics was ever heard from Booth during the first week of his engagement, although he was an attentive listener to the angry discussions pro and con., till one morning somebody (I forget who) read aloud from a newspaper of the arrest of Marshal George P. Kane in Baltimore, and his incarceration in Fort McHenry by order of Stanton.

One of the company (now dead) who shall be nameless, approved heartily of the act, and denounced the entire city of Baltimore as [a hot-bed of rebels, and should be razed to the ground. His opponent took an entirely different view of the question, and thought the levelling to the earth should be done to one Edwin Stanton by the aid of a pistol shot. The unfortunate Lincoln's name was never mentioned. At the suggestion of shooting Stanton, a voice, tremulous with emotion, at the back of the stage was heard to exclaim. 'Yes, sir, you are right!' It was Booth's. '*I know* George P. Kane well; he is my friend, and the man who could drag him from the bosom of his family for no crime whatever, but a mere suspicion that he *may* commit one some time, deserves a dog's death!'

"It was not the matter of what he said, it was the manner and general appearance of the speaker, that awed us. It would remind you of Lucifer's defiance at the council. He stood there the embodiment of evil. But it was for a moment only, for in the next breath with his sharp, ringing voice, he exclaimed, 'Go on with the rehearsal!'

"That day and its events passed from memories of the majority of us, but I never could forget the scene; the statuesque figure of the young man uttering those few words in the centre of the old stage of Wallack's can never be forgotten. Some months after I was awakened from a sound sleep and told that President Lincoln had been shot. Half dazed I inquired when, and where, and being told, asked who was the assassin? Wilkes Booth is thought to be, but it is only a supposition that he is the guilty one. I felt it was but too true, for I could see him in my mind's eye as upon that day in the old theatre when he would have under-

taken any task, however bold. A few hours after proved the rumor to be true. The last act of the tragedy all are familiar with, and one day standing at the grave outside of Baltimore where all that is mortal of father and son lie, I could not stifle memories of the past, and felt like dropping a tear of pity over the sudden and early downfall of one so promising, that had he lived might now be delighting nightly thousands with his powerful acting."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE SUMMER VACATION.

The close of a theatrical season, which rarely exceeds forty weeks, and which terminates in the month of June, is always hailed by the prosperous actor as an occasion when he can find enjoyment and rest in some cosy spot; or if he is in the ranks, and is ambitious to be reckoned in the constellation of dramatic stars, he looks forward to his summer vacation as a time in which he will have opportunity to fix up his business for the coming season; or if he has not yet secured a manager — probably needing one with money — he can button-hole the financiers of the "Square," as the meeting-place and mart of the theatrical fraternity of the entire continent is termed. The stars are becoming so numerous, and, indeed, so insignificant, that even members of the variety profession with the thinnest pretensions in the world to dramatic distinction, and there are few on the legitimate stage above the ranks of utility, who have not aspirations of the same bright and twinkling kind. The beginning of every season finds a hundred or more new combinations, with little talent and less money, starting out on the road; and one, two, or three weeks brings them back, either "on their baggage," or "on their uppers," — that is, the railroad company carries them home and holds the baggage for their fares, or they "count the railroad ties," which is a metaphoric way of saying they walk home. Very few of the cheap

variety artists of the present day are worthy of even a mean place in the "legit.," as they designate the legitimate stage; and it may be said, too, that some stars who have succeeded in reaching the legitimate boards would scarcely be reckoned bright ornaments among the gems of the variety stage. This, however, is a subject beyond the purposes of this work, and so I will not go further into it.

LA GRAND DUCHESS.

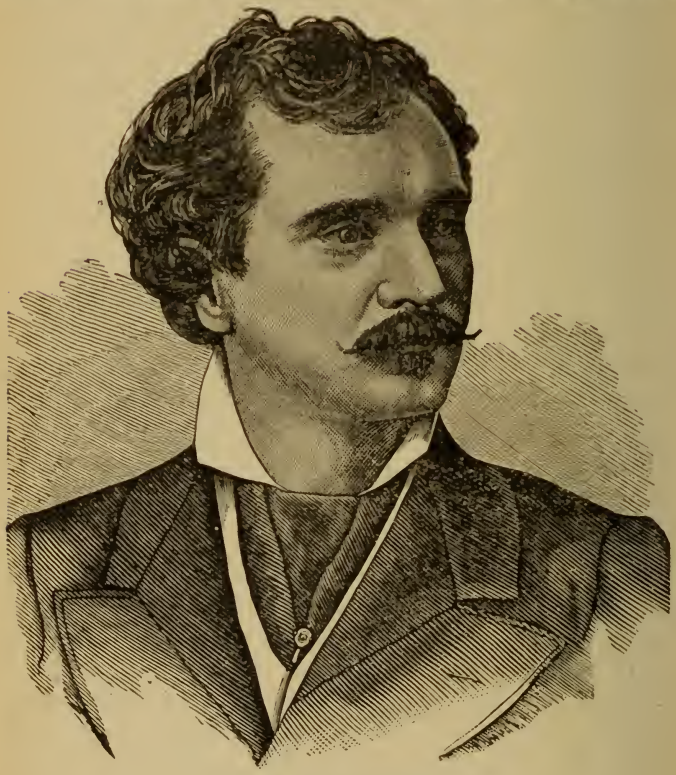
The actor and actress who have settled down to the regular routine of general work are among the persons who get most enjoyment for their money during their summer vacation. Stars, male and female alike, who have made money and reached a satisfactory round on the ladder of fame, though they may not have cottages by the seaside, or summer residences of anything like a pretentious character, can also be counted among the number who "loaf and invite their souls" in a profitable and pleasurable manner. Most

of the male stars have nice little nooks by river, lake, or seaside, in quiet, cool, and shady spots, while the tragediennes and comediennes of prominence and fortune seem to prefer either handsome residences in New York or other Eastern metropolis, or else a watering-place cottage. Maggie Mitchell prefers Long Branch. So does Mary Anderson, who lives a very secluded life at this gay resort. Most of her time is passed in playing with her little step-sister on the lawn of their pretty place. She rides on horseback a great deal, and takes an occasional short cruise on her new yacht, "The Galatea," which she has named after the latest role added to her repertoire. Minnie Palmer, about the only real rival Lotta has got, summers at Long Branch. Emma Abbott goes to Cape Ann. Lester Wallack devotes himself and his vacation to making short trips in his steam yacht. John McCullough hasn't settled down anywhere yet. Last year he went to England to work and win a London reputation; this year he is with Gen. Sheridan in the Yellowstone Valley. Fred. Marsden likes to go fishing at Salmon Lake. McKee Rankin has a stock farm at Bois Blanc, Canada, where he spends his summers. John W. Norton flies away to Coney Island, Long Branch, and a round of the Eastern watering-places, Mrs. Norton always accompanying him. And so the category might be lengthened out. But it is useless. Established stars have established fortunes as well as reputations only by dint of the hardest, and, I might add, in many cases, least appreciated kind of work, and they deserve the thousands of dollars they make every year. Few of the great stars fall less than $50,000 for a forty weeks' season, and there are few whose share goes under $1,000 a week. Joe Emmet accumulates money faster, probably, than any other man who

plays to the same prices, and John McCullough and Mary Anderson are among the reapers of the richest harvests. Booth seldom plays a season through, but when he does he, of course, carries off the honors.

Actors and actresses, while generous as a class, save their money, and very few are found loitering around New York "broke," during the vacation months. Still there are cases of poverty. I have known a former popular Irish comedian, who belongs to a family of popular and prosperous members of the profession, to walk the streets of a Western town many a day without a cent in his pockets and nothing to look up to at night for shelter but the stars high and pitiless over his bald head. Everybody has read about the English actor, who, driven to distress, and standing at the door of starvation, donned an old gray wig, and was found singing and begging around Union Square. It was only when a policeman in arresting him accidentally pulled off his wig that the actor's identity and condition were known. The former was carefully concealed and the latter cheerfully and liberally relieved. I was at a banquet given by the press of St. Louis to Thomas W. Keene, the tragedian, during his first starring season, when among the few guests who sat down to the table, between Billy Crane and Stuart Robson, was a short, stout, gray-headed, and long gray-bearded man, whom nobody knew. The night was bitterly cold, still the old fellow wore only a long, gray linen duster over a thin, red woollen shirt, with a very queer pair of pantaloons and rough brogans. His high, battered and wide-brimmed hat rested under his chair as if he was afraid some of the company would steal it. He swept clean every dish set before him, emptied every glass of wine, and with bent head, and knife and fork in hand, was waiting anxiously for each course when it

came. As soon as he was noticed the question passed around, "Who is the old gray?" and fun was poked at him ruthlessly; but it rebounded lightly from the folds of his linen duster, and he heeded not the blows. When the toasts went around the old man was asked



JOHN W. NORTON.

to respond to one, and got up and spoke charmingly for half an hour or more, introducing the Marseillaise, both as a martial hymn, and as a song and dance. Then he explained how the city editor of a local paper had sent him to report the banquet; how he came shivering to the marrow of his bones to the door of the

Club House — the most fashionable in the city — and asked permission to go into the kitchen to warm himself previous to appearing at the banquet board, a permission which was granted. The old man spoke so eloquently in telling a pitiful story of his poverty, Pat Short, treasurer of the Olympic, at the instigation, I think, of Manager Norton of the Grand Opera House, picked up a hat and took up a collection from the ten newspaper men and ten actors present. The collection netted $39.75, which was poured in the old man's two hands, while his eyes were wet with tears. Then he was freely plied with wine, and danced, sang, and gave phrenological examinations for two hours, when the crowd dispersed in the greatest good humor. Stuart Robson told this story to a Boston *Times* man who made a two-column article out of it that travelled all over the country, and in which all the credit of the charity with the figures greatly increased was appropriated unjustly, by Messrs. Robson & Crane. But this is not what I started out about.

"While the actor seeks deep shadows under the far-reaching arms of huge trees," writes the New York *Dramatic Times* man, "or leisurely smokes his pipe beneath heavy boughs, thick with scented buds and blossoms, some one is working out his programme for the next season. This 'some one' is often confounded with the actor himself, or is taken for the parasite who fosters and thrives on some indirect vein of the living and active theatrical body. The sturdy man of business, who by chance happens to pass the pavement between Broadway and Fifth Avenue, on the south side of Union Square, fancies that the crowd of well-dressed and, as a rule, quiet men, are idle professionals, lounging away a warm day between gossip and beer. He little knows that this is the theatrical

exchange of the Western World, where business is carried on in the same honorable mode as at the Stock Exchange, without the Bedlam noises, and that the seeming drifters under the grateful shade of the Morton House are as shrewd in looking at the run of the theatrical market as any Wall Street broker. Every theatre or nomadic attraction throughout the United States has, at some time during the day, a 'some one' looking out for 'dates' and 'booking' memoranda for future contracts. Without any agreement to meet or transact business, the 'some one' appears with the June roses and makes it a point to pass the Rialto between the hours of ten A. M. and four P. M. The affairs of this exchange are gigantic (when for instance one manager gives *bona fide* evidence that he has cleared $40,000 in the past season), and though it would be impossible to make an estimate of the total amount, it is safe to say that millions are the result of these seemingly casual meetings.

"A guide published last year gives a total of about four thousand five hundred theatres, that kept open their doors for an average of forty weeks. Taking the poor attraction, with the star that fills the theatre to overflowing, the average receipts would be about $150 for each theatre, or $675,000 paid every night for amusements throughout the United States. This would make a total for one week, of $4,050,000, or, for the entire season of forty weeks, $162,000,000, not counting matinees. Taking, then, an industry that brings in over $160,000,000 in round numbers during the season, the neatly dressed men that are said to 'hang around the Square' are the men that control or pull the wires and set the machinery in motion. The figures above are, after all, but approximate, and neither include matinees, which in themselves would count one

million, nor does it include the circus world, which is not represented on the Rialto.

"On the other side of the ledger will be found twenty-eight thousand actors drawing their salaries from these receipts; and about twelve thousand more, consisting of carpenters, property-men, scene-shifters, the employees of the front of the theatre, etc. Twenty dollars a week each would make a fair average for the entire forty thousand, and would aggregate a total of $32,000,000 in salaries alone. Add to this the rent of the four thousand five hundred different theatres and halls which, at a moderate calculation of say $4,000 each, would make $18,000,000 for the year.

"The season having closed, actors seek secluded spots, revel in the enjoyment of flannel shirts and country life, enjoying a *dolce far niente* either by sea-shore or in wooded glens, and are described as 'resting.' In the nooks many have charming households, and under their roof-trees happiness reigns, without much reference to 'shop.' The manager or agent, however, as soon as one season ends, procures his 'booking' book and starts for the Square. His plan may be to play his attraction in the South. The end of his route will then likely be New Orleans. After having his date in that city, he will 'fill up' his time going and coming back. If the attraction be good, he fills his time by playing in larger cities for one week; if not, he makes one or two-night stands, which, interpreted, means that his company plays for one or two nights in a city. Starting in September, he works his way down by Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and then in the beaten route through Richmond, Memphis, Atlanta, etc. This route fixing shows the experienced manager; for should he, for instance, have the week commencing February 1st in New Orleans,

he would have a night in Mobile, Alabama, before reaching there. To a new man the Mobile manager might offer Saturday, giving the company time to reach New Orleans on Monday. If this be accepted, it would show inexperience in the route maker, as the fashionable night at Mobile is Friday, Saturday being 'niggers'' night. He should so time it as to reach Mobile on Friday, play that night to big business, have his matinee, and do the best he could with Saturday night. In other sections of the country he must know when the workman's pay-day is. In the oil and mining regions, for instance, the men are paid but every fortnight. The attraction which reaches there soonest after the pay-day fares the best.

"Another of the grave considerations is the question of railroad fares. All but the big attractions must take into serious consideration the general increase of railroad rates to the profession. Some of the roads have not joined in the pool, and still cater to theatrical custom. The cities on these routes are likely to have a rush of attractions this season, and, as a consequence, will before long yield poor receipts. At any rate there is a tendency, even among the best-paying companies, to take short 'jumps' this season (1882–3) and visit cities that would have been passed over with contempt a short time since. But the difference of travelling expenses one or three hundred dollars in a day, with a company of forty people, dragging extra baggage, means a big difference in profits.

"The man on the Square has to look out for all these things, as well as the printing of the company, one of the most important and expensive items of a travelling company, an item which will often make him pass wakeful days and sleepless nights. These contracts, of course, vary for the different organiza-

tions. The big theatrical gun as well as the smallest, either personally or through agents, keeps himself posted of the affairs of the Rialto. No matter as to how heavy calibre the big gun may be, he may tell his friend he don't visit the Square, but he does, or is sure to let it be known that he lives at the Union Square Hotel, or at some other hotel near by, where his booking is done. Managers of provincial theatres, eager to fill the time for their houses, travel eastward to the Mecca of theatredom, or have their booking done by local agents or firms engaged in this city in that specialty — the commission for an attraction being from $5 to $7. One firm of this kind in Union Square do the booking for more than fifty theatres, while another and larger one in Twenty-third Street controls entire circuits, and furnishes attractions for several hundred theatres. The manager having laid the foundation of his plan, takes the summer to complete it, changing a town here, or a date there, to make his route as complete as possible, and as convenient to travel over, so as to reach a town and have his company rest before appearing.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

FUN AMONG THE ELKS.

The benevolent and protective order of Elks is a mystic organization whose membership is made up almost entirely of theatrical people, newspaper men, and people who have some claim or other on the dramatic profession. It is a noble institution, having for its foundation those grand and beautiful principles — friendship, charity, and justice. Every prominent actor in the country is found on its rolls, and the good work it accomplishes from one year to another is extensive, and worthy the widest recognition. The only thing I have to find fault with is its initiation business. Being a jolly, fun-loving set, every candidate is put through in the liveliest kind of style. I had a friend, a low comedian named Jughandle, who got me to be an Elk, and I think they put up an unusually interesting bill for my initiation. In fact, I don't think it was a genuine Elk initiation at all, but it was awful funny for those who witnessed, and not a bit pleasant for me.

It was Sunday afternoon when I was introduced to the mysteries of this Order. The first person I met in the ante-chamber of the lodge room was an officer called the Outer Spyglass. He ordered two strange Elks to lead me away to another room where I was blindfolded, and a long gown was thrown over me. A large red box, coffin-shaped, with hinges in the middle of the back, and a round hole in the middle of the split

lid, so that by opening the box, adjusting a man's neck to the place intended for it, and then closing the box again, the contrivance became the ghastliest sort of a pillory. There were arm openings in the sides of the coffin and the lower portion which had been sawed short was not boarded up, so that the legs might be as free as possible under the circumstances, in walking. Into a wooden overcoat of this kind I was hurriedly thrust, with my head protruding through the hole in the lid. The garment had been built for a man with a longer and thinner neck than mine, and its proportions were so entirely out of keeping with my physique, that while I was choking, and my spinal column threatened to crack any minute, my arms and legs were suffering the severest torture. It was certainly a comfort to know that dead people do not as a general thing wear their ligneous ulsters in this style. When I had the overcoat on, the attendants tied a piece of rope around my neck, a three-pound prayer-book was placed in my right hand, and a euchre deck of cards in my left. Being ready for the sacrifice, one of the Elks was delegated to introduce me to the Order. He took hold of the rope that hung from my neck and hauled me up to the door at which the Grand Microscope stands guard.

"The candidate is ready," said the outer Spy-Glass.

"Let him enter!" was the Microscope's command.

Trembling and helpless, I stood at last, a picture of the utmost ridiculousness and misery, in the presence of the High, Mighty and Magnificent Muck-a-Muck of the Order.

"Quivering candidate!" the Muck-a-Muck exclaimed. "The Elks give you greeting. Every person here assembled stretches out his right hand to you, and

the champion Indian-Club Swinger will now give you, in one solid chunk, the congratulations of this entire gathering for the success that promises to attend your

A CANDIDATE IN REGALIA.

attempt to enter our Order. Club-Swinger, congratulate!"

The Club-Swinger did so. It was the most startling congratulation I was ever the recipient of. If a train of

cars travelling at the rate of 100 miles an hour had run into me I could not have been more surprised. A blow that would have made a pile driver or a quartz hammer feel that it had no more force than the hind leg of a house-fly was planted on the coffin lid right over the first button of my vest, and for three minutes I sped through space. When I landed on my back I felt as if I had run against another such blow speeding in an opposite direction to the first. Every bone in my body was jarred to my finger tips and toe-nails, and the wrench my neck got in the sudden stoppage gave me the impression that my spine had been all at once lengthened out sixteen feet and was still growing.

"Potential Pill-Prescriber!" the High Muck-a-Muck commanded, "examine the candidate's condition and immediately report upon the same! How has he stood the congratulation?"

The Master Physician felt my pulse, muttered to himself "14,—48,—96,—135," and answered "He has stood it well, your Majesty."

"Then let him thrice make the circuit of the Peculiar Circle!" was the next command.

Several Elks helped me to my feet, and after gathering up the scattered euchre deck and restoring it and the prayer-book to my outstretched hands, the first attendant seized the rope still dangling from my neck, and led me on a rapid trot around the lodge room. Wherever I passed heavy blows were rained upon my coffin covering, and I imagined I heard several half-suppressed laughs among my tormentors. I was beginning to get mad and had about made up my mind to throw off the wooden yoke I was carrying around, tear the bandage from my eyes, and sail in and punch the heads of half-a-dozen Elks, when I was pounced upon, dragged to the floor and roughly relieved of the coffin.

I felt better after this and calmly awaited the next move.

"Bring the candidate before the throne," was the next command of the High Muck-a-Muck.

With the assistance of a few Elks I succeeded in reaching a spot where we stopped, and which, I suppose, was right in the midst of the radiance that hovers nearest the presiding officer's throne. It is needless to say that I felt very badly, and I must have looked frightful, especially when, as happened just then, somebody clapped a demolished stove-pipe hat on my head to add to my already ridiculous aspect. I had hopes, however, that the end was near; but I was sadly mistaken.

"Now, trembling neophyte," said the High Muck-a-Muck, in very impressive tones, "the most important part of our ceremony still remains. Hitherto you have had all the fun; from this time on the fun will be on the side of the assembled Elks. Let the Grand Microscope search the candidate. See that he has no life-preserver under his vest, or pre-Raphælite panel of sole leather concealed in that portion of his pantaloons to which the hind straps of his suspenders are fastened."

"He is entirely defenceless, your Majesty," reported the Grand Microscope, after having made the necessary examination.

"Then let him learn the three motions through which every Prophet passes before attaining to the grand secrets of our Order. Let him test the swiftness of the Descent, the roughness of the Path of Progress, and the suddenness of the Upward flight to glory, and the possession of the everlasting talisman. When this has been done, if the candidate still lives, prepare, my mystic brethren, to welcome him into your circle."

My attendants now dealt with me very kindly. I hardly knew what to think of the easy, almost respect-

ful, manner in which they took me by the arm as we walked along. Not a word was said. Silence intense as that which wields a spell over an audience while some daring act is in progress on the flying trapeze, seemed to surround me. As we walked I felt that there was the slightest bit of a rise — a gradual going upward — to my path. I paid little attention to this, however, because I was receiving unusually kind treatment at the time. I had just made up my mind that I had passed all the perilous places along the road, and was about to mutter to myself a mixture of thanks and self-gratulations for the security and comparative blissfulness of my condition, when, with surprising suddenness, my attendants caught me by the arms and legs, gave me a gentle waft forward, and then, reversing the motion, clapped me upon a rough plank at a very steep incline, down which I shot like lightning, regardless of the splinters that ran up into the tenderest portions of my pantaloons, and occasionally went on short and sharp expeditions into the neighborhood of my backbone. Down! Down!! Down!!! I slid, until I thought I had started from the top end of Jacob's ladder, away up beyond the furtherest space through which the tiniest stars twinkle, and was on a rapid and important journey to the centre of the earth. I kept on thinking this way until, for a moment, there was a cessation of the splinter annoyance upon that portion of my anatomy on which I usually do my sleighing. I felt myself falling, and then I felt myself stop. The force of gravitation was never before so fully and satisfactorily impressed upon me. I got so heavy when I had no further to go that I nearly crushed my life out with my own weight, and the sitting down was done with such alacrity that a pile-driver couldn't have sent the splinters that clung to my pantaloons further into my flesh. Add to this that

the first thing I struck was not a spring mattress, or a high hair cushion, but a wheel-barrow, filled with small wooden cones, with sharp edges and cruel points. The shock caused me to send up such a howl that I imagined I could see the hair of every Elk in the land standing on end. A well-defined laugh answered the howl, and before I could think of the front end of the prayers for the dead, I heard the High Muck-a-Muck's voice ring out :—

"Wing him away," he commanded, "on Eincycle, the one-wheeled horse of the Hereafter."

They wung me away at once. I discovered that the one-wheeled horse designated by the High Muck-a-Muck when he made use of the half German and half Latin word in his command was a very modern wheel-barrow. The road over which the winging was done was, to say the least, an unpleasant one. There was an obstruction of some kind every six inches — hills and hollows without number — and, even if I had not already been physically shattered by the exciting episodes of the first part of the initiation, the merciless jolting I got and the sharp-pointed cones I kept dancing up and down on were sufficient torture to make me long for some quiet, peaceful spot on which I might stretch out my wearied limbs and close my eyes forever. I don't know how far I was carried over this rough road, which terminated in a tank of chilly water, into which I was unceremoniously dumped, while a shout went up from the assembled brotherhood that indicated that they were highly delighted over my

MUCK-A-MUCK.

prospects of being drowned. After sinking three times without any apparent effort having been made to rescue me, I evinced a disposition to remain under water. I was beginning to fill up rapidly, and celestial visions were already flitting before me, when something sharp ran through my shoulder and I felt myself lifted to the water's surface.

"See that he remains blindfolded," shouted the High Muck-a-Muck, and, while I still dangled from an iron hook on the end of a stout pole, the dripping handkerchief was tightened across my eyes.

"Put him through the Purgation rite," was the next order, in accordance with which I was thrown, face forward, upon a barrel, and one Elk taking me by the heels while another held my head, I was rolled and rolled until I had passed through one of the most violent spells of sea-sickness anybody ever experienced.

"Will the candidate recover?" asked the High Muck-a-Muck.

"I have some hopes, your Majesty," answered the Potential Pill-Prescriber.

"Then bring in the Krupp gun," the Muck-a-Muck commanded, "and while he still has life, let the candidate climb the cloud-heights around which many a Prophet has soared."

I was trembling with cold up to the time the High Muck-a-Muck mentioned the Krupp gun; just then a chill of fear ran down my back and my knees knocked together so violently that I could hear the bones rattle. The great cannon was rolled in and placed in position near where I stood.

"Spread the merciful net three hundred yards away," ordered the High Muck-a-Muck, "and sprinkle the carpet in its centre with fourteen papers of tacks.

Place the sheet-iron bumper ten yards beyond, to prevent the candidate from being shot out of bounds. Charge the cannon with thirty pounds of powder; load her up and let her fly!"

They poured the thirty pounds of powder into the huge mouth of the cannon, rammed down an iron or steel plate, and then to my horror, grabbed me and pushed me into the piece of ordnance until my feet rested on the metallic plate and my head barely protruded from the top of the war-engine. Buckets of chopped ice were poured in to fill up the vacant space, and before the congealed wadding was all in, my toes and fingers were completely frost-bitten. When everything seemed to be in readiness the High Muck-a-Muck said: —

"The candidate has no hat on. Fish his plug out of the lake, put an air-cushion inside and then decorate his head with it."

The "air-cushion" referred to was only a blown bladder. It was placed in the top of my bruised and battered wet hat, which was tightly and gracefully placed upon my head.

"Is he ready?" shouted the High Muck-a-Muck.

"He is," was the Grand Microscope's answer.

"Then, let her go!"

Fiz! boom! ! bang! ! ! I knew the match was at the fuse; felt the whole business give way; heard the scream of the powder leaving the cannon at the same moment as myself; saw the flash of fire as it burned my eyebrows, moustache and the ends of my hair; had my breath swept away by the swiftness of my flight, and while all these experiences were mingled in one instantaneous jumble in my mind, whack went my head against the sheet-iron bumper; bang! went the explosive bladder in my hat, and, hurled back by the

recoil, I fell right in the middle of the carpet space in the merciful net, just back in the midst of the fourteen papers of tacks that had been sprinkled there for my benefit. I howled and jumped into the air, but every time I jumped I fell back again and got a fresh invoice of tacks in my flesh. Although there seemed to be nothing particularly mirth-provoking in my situation, the assembled Elks laughed heartily until I was stuck as full of carpet tacks as a boiled ham is of cloves at a pastry-cook's ball. Then they took me out of the net, picked the tacks out of my back, and stood me up, weak and exhausted, according to instructions, in front of the throne.

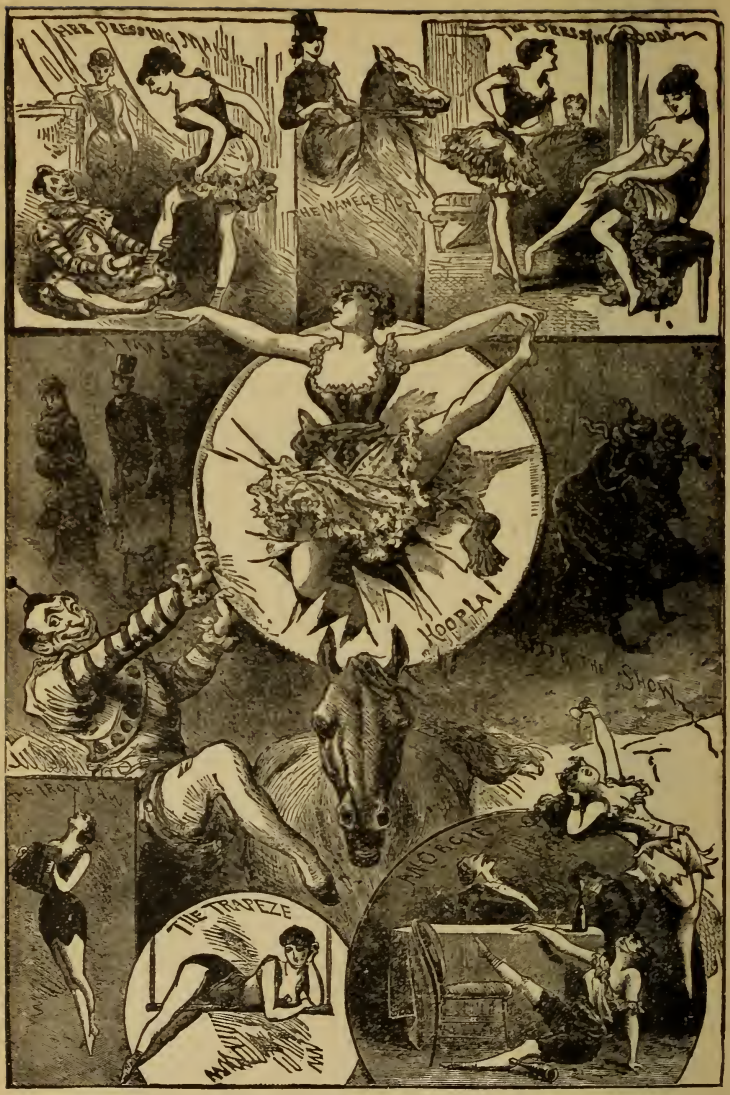
"The candidate," said the High Muck-a-Muck, "has given satisfactory evidence of his fortitude and endurance, and we are now prepared to receive him forever into our number as an Elk. Let him take the oath and kiss the branching antlers."

The oath was administered and I saluted the antlers with my lips as fervently as I could under the circumstances.

"Now remove the blindfold."

The handkerchief was removed from my eyes and I saw — nothing. But I was an Elk.

I have seen many candidates initiated into this Order since that time, but I have never seen any such proceeding as that here described, which leads me to infer that some friends, and among them Jughandle, put up a job on me and used me a little roughly, for the sake of the sport it afforded them.


HER DRESSING MAN
THE MANEGE AGE
HOOPLA
THE SHOW
THE TRAPEZE
MORGIE

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CIRCUS IS HERE.

A "disengaged canvasman" who was probably driven to poetry for lack of other work wrote the following spring verses which were published in the New York *Clipper:* —

In the spring the gorgeous banners float upon the circus tent,
And the active agents' fancies on "advances" all are bent.
In the spring the "bounding brothers" try some new and daring games,
While the opposition "fakirs" call each other awful names.

In the spring the "sideshow-blowers," with their never-failing tongues,
Pump out paralyzing language from their copper-fastened lungs.
In the spring the fair Circassian, with her every hair on end,
Leaves again her native Brooklyn, on the road her steps to wend.

In the spring ye "candy-butcher" shows confections old and tough,
While the gentle lemonadist juggles with the same old stuff.
In the spring ye merry jester learns conundrums bright and new
(Dug up by the Christy Minstrels in the year of '52).

In the spring — and in the ring — the riders whirl around in style,
While the air is filled with romance (and rheumatics — I should smile)!
In the spring — oh, well, I'll cheese it, for I haven't got a cent,
And I think I hear the landlord, coming up to ask for rent!

There is more fact than poetry in these lines. The spring brings gaily colored posters, like flowers of many hues, to decorate the dead walls and fences; and litters the streets with small hand-bills in which the

wonders of the evening show are dwelt upon in a style of rhetoric that would make George Francis Train sick. The name of the show is too long to print in this book, even if I began at the title-page and wrote small and close through every page down to the lower right-hand corner of the back cover. Since they got to consolidating shows, they have by some elastic process begun to lengthen out the name, and at every reappearance of a circus in a town the bill-poster must add a few yards to the length of his fence to get the improved and newly elongated name on it, and to make a few square yards of additional space for the fresh stock of impossible pictures the artist has chopped out for the show. I like to regard the ridiculous art and the brazen exaggeration of these posters. What consummate impertinence prompts the managers of these concerns to put a circus on paper that could never have an existence under the sun is something that it is impossible to understand. They ask and they must have the patronage of the public they insult by spreading such absurdities upon the wall as the picture of one horse lying on his back with his legs up and another horse standing above him, their eight hoofs meeting; or of a man being blown from the mouth of a cannon, or indeed any of the other ridiculous and gaudy illustrations which are designed to catch the eye at a distance of one hundred yards and to hold the attention long enough to make the investigator of bill-board literature part with a half dollar. But it seems that circus managers and circus agents have no other idea of advertising than to make the ink and the colors on their posters say as much as the imagination can suggest, and to make people pay for the privilege of finding out that they have been bamboozled. It seems to be remunerative though, for a circus can create greater

commotion in a town than a big fire, and from the moment it pitches its tents — a city of canvas, they usually call it — until the glory of the visit fades, thousands are interested in it and the opening of its doors always finds a throng with tickets in hand anxious to get inside as early as possible, to have a thorough look at the menagerie and in the other way, by putting in full time to get their money's worth out of the show.

The circus always comes to town with a flourish. There is a grand street parade. The dozen elephants and sixteen camels follow the band wagon, and then comes the cavalcade, gentlemen in court costumes and ladies in rich trailing robes with jaunty hat of gay ribbons and feathers flying in the breeze. The lion tamer is in the cage with the feeble animals that he keeps stirring up with his whip; the clown in his little chariot with his trick mule, affords amusement to the children along the line; then the snake charmer rolls by fondling the slimy reptiles, and after that comes a procession of red wagons with trampish drivers in red coats, and perhaps there are some grotesque figures on top of the wagons. At the rear some enterprising clothier has an advertising vehicle. That is about all there is to it, if we add the Undine wagon that has a place sometimes at the head and sometimes in the middle of this "gorgeous street pageant." Still it goes from one end of town to the other, scaring horses and creating the greatest excitement among the circus-going public. The $10,000 beauty "gag" that worked so successfully last season when Adam Forepaugh claimed to have paid that amount to Miss Louise Montague, a variety actress, for merely appearing in the street parade, riding on a howdah high upon the back of his largest elephant and for participating in the grand entree at the opening of each

performance. Barnum tried to make some free advertising for himself this season by announcing that he would pay $10,000 to the handsomest man and $20,000 to the handsomest lady, but he was shrewd enough to see that the scheme would not bring him back $30,000, so he allowed it to fall through.

This subject of costly beauties recalls an incident that took place in a Western theatre. At the house in question an actress was performing who, in times gone by, figured as the faithless sweetheart of an eminent sport in that very city. That gentleman hearing that his light of love was about to appear in a new line visited the theatre to see for himself whether or not it was really she. The memory of past troubles caused him to drink rather more than was good for him, and when he took his seat in the parquette near the stage, he was in a great measure incapacitated from acting with coolness and judgment. He believed he recognized the woman as the one who had caused him so much sorrow and trouble. His feelings got the better of him, and standing up in his seat he exclaimed: —

"You cost me $25,000, you cost me $25,000, and I'll cut your d—d heart out!"

This outcry brought one of the members of the company to her assistance, armed with a property revolver, and the air was full of war and rumors of war until the police arrived. The $25,000 victim was led out and the play went on.

While the parade is on its way back to the circus lot, I will tell the reader of an exciting parade that was witnessed at Runcorn, England, last summer: Messrs. Sanger & Son, who were exhibiting in the town, had announced a procession in connection with their great hippodrome, and from twelve to one o'clock, although rain was falling very heavily, large crowds of people

began to assemble in the Market Square, Bridge Street and the wide space in front of the Town Hall and the public offices. To one very large car forty horses had been harnessed, to be driven through the town by one

TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLAR BEAUTY.

man. This was drawn up waiting for the start, almost opposite the *Guardian* office, while higher up Bridge Street stood twelve ponies harnessed to a smaller car. Near the Town Hall stood two other cars, and as one

o'clock approached and the rain showed signs of abating, the procession was expected very shortly to form and make the circuit of the town. Suddenly, among the horses standing near to the shop of Messrs. Handley & Co., there was a great commotion, and loud shouts were heard to "Clear the road." The twelve ponies had taken fright and were rushing down Bridge Street towards the fountain. There was no one in charge, and it was evident that some very serious accident would result from the panic which seemed to have seized the horses. To make matters worse, the forty horses became frightened, and, with the ponderous car behind them, joined the ponies in their gallop. Many persons sought refuge in the shops and doorways. Those who were not fortunate enough to reach this shelter were trampled upon and crushed, and the scene was one of the wildest excitement. At one moment it seemed as though the great colossal car would be overturned among the struggling crowd, while the plate-glass windows in the shops on the south side of the street were within an inch of being smashed. The scene was not of long duration, but it lasted long enough to injure at least ten people and imperil the safety of hundreds more. When nearing the commissioners' offices, several constables who were in the court-room, hearing the noise outside, rushed into the street, and were just in time to seize the ponies by the heads and turn them down Mersey Street before they reached the Royal Hotel. The horses, through the courageous exertions of the police and some of Messrs. Sanger & Son's drivers, were brought to a standstill opposite the Royal Hotel.

Many people affect to be indifferent to the attractions of the circus, saying that they saw one when they were young and as all circuses are the same there is

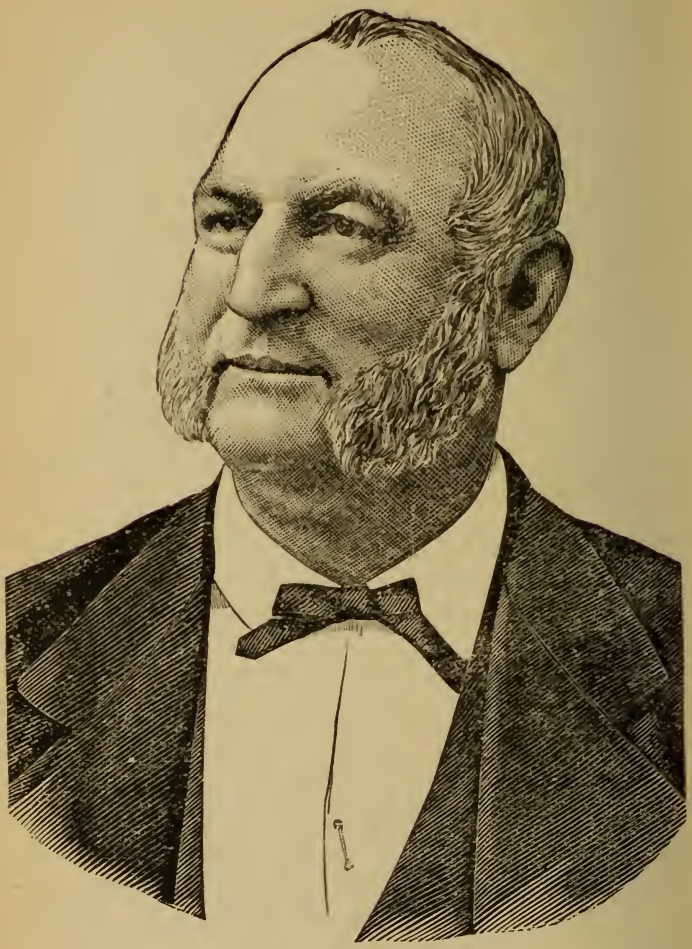
no use in going to see another. These people are about right. There has been nothing new in the genuine features of the circus for the past fifty years. There are a few deceptive tricks that have been seen only of late years but they are mere ephemeral illusions, easy of explanation, and time will take them out of the circus ring as it took the lion-taming act. I can remember the time when the cage of lions was dragged into the middle of the arena and amid the greatest excitement the alleged lion-tamer went in among the animals, beat them about, lay down upon the back of one and put his head between the wide-open jaws of another. Now that performance is lost sight of among the multitude of curiosities in the menageries. The great unchangeable features of a show, the gymnastic, acrobatic and equestrian work, are the same now that it was a half century ago. Still with all its want of novelty it is attractive, as are all shows, and grown people have been known to share the enthusiasm of the little ones in playing circus after witnessing a performance and while the sawdust fever was still on them. A short, funny sketch that appeared in the Louisville *Courier-Journal* will do to illustrate the hold the circus has upon the average boy's heart. The writer says: —

"After the circus had opened to the public yesterday a gray-haired colored brother, who held the hand of a boy of fourteen as both stood gazing at the tent, shook his head in a solemn manner, and observed: —

"'It's no use to cry 'bout it, sonny, kase we am not gwine in dar no how.'

"'But I want ter,' whined the boy.

"'In course you does. All chill'en of your aige run to evil an' wickedness, an' dey mus' be sot down on by dose wid experience.'



ADAM FOREPAUGH.

"'"You used to go,' urged the boy.

"'Sartin I did, but what was de result? I had sich a load on my conscience dat I couldn't sleep nights.

I cum powerful nigh bein' a lost man, an' in dem days de price of admishun was only a quarter, too.'

"'Can't we both git in for fifty cents?'

"'I 'speck we might, but to-morrer you'd be bilin' ober wid wickedness an' I'd be a backslipper from de church. Hush up, now, kase I hain't got but thirty cents, and dar am no show fur crawlin' under de canvas.'

"The boy still continued to cry, and the old man pulled him behind a wagon, and continued:

"'Henry Clay Scott, which had you rather do — go inter de circus an' den take de awfullest lickin' a boy eber got, or have a glass of dat red lemonade an' go to Heaben when you die? Befo' you decide let me explain dat I mean a lickin' which will take ebery inch of de hide off, an' I also mean one of dem big glasses of lemonade. In addishun, I would obsarve dat a circus am gwine on in Heaben all de time, an' de price of admisshun am simply nominal. Now, sah, what do you say?'

"The boy took the lemonade, but he drank it with tears in his eyes."

A man living near Bloomington, Illinois, in 1870, sold his stove to a neighbor to obtain funds to take his family to a circus that had pitched its tents near the city. When he got back he said he was not a bit sorry, that "he'd seen the clown, an' the gals a ridin', an' the fellows doin' flip-flaps, an' waz so perfectly satisfied that ef another suck-cus came along next year, an' he had a stove, he'd go to see it on the same terms ag'in."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

UNDER THE CANVAS.

The one great wish of the small boy's heart, as he stands at a respectful distance from the ticket wagon watching the huge canvas rise and sink — apparently with as much ease as the flag flies from the top of the centre-pole — is to get inside the tent before the band begins to play. He may not have a cent to pay the admission, but he has Micawberish hopes that far surpass any money value that might be placed upon a small boy, that something will turn up to gain him admission to the show. He knows that if the canvas-men give him a good chance he can crawl in under the cloth and make his way up through the seats. He has been told that if he is caught at such a trick the showmen will drag him to the dressing-tent and fill his hair full of powdered sawdust. The canvas-men are, however, vigilant; besides that, they are lazy and do not care to move around, so the small boy must be content to throw handsprings in the sawdust-sprinkled lot, and keep on hoping until the show is out. In this respect the minute boy does not betray the same shrewdness credited to a Baltimore girl. She was on a visit to her brother's ranche near Austin, Texas, when a small circus came along. It is considered the acme of honesty to beat the circus in that region — in fact, paying is heartily deprecated. Although only a month in the place, the Baltimore belle was thoroughly imbued with the cowboy spirit,

in as far as "beating" the circus was concerned, and when the show pitched its tents she made up her mind as to what she was going to do. At night, when

"BEATING" THE CIRCUS.

the show was under headway, she calmly approached the circus tent on stilts, and viewed the first half

of the performance through the opening between the canvas and the roof. One of the fighters of the show detecting something wrong, crept around with a club to "smash" the intruder, but received a kick in the eye from the fair stilt performer, and was so taken aback that the cowboys had time to rally to her support and raid the show while she at a safe distance applauded the conquering herders. The troupe left town that night in a sadly damaged condition.

Until late years circuses generally gave a balloon ascension before the afternoon performance took place, and sometimes a slack-wire performance was added. The latter free exhibition dropped out of sight a short time ago, and since 1876 there have been few circus balloon ascensions; they have been abandoned on account of the danger and frequency of accidents. Everybody remembers the fate of Donaldson and Greenwood, the former an æronaut in the employ of Barnum at the time, the latter, a Chicago newspaper reporter. They left Chicago July 15, 1875, in a tattered old balloon. It was a remarkably fine day, and not the remotest shadow of danger fell across the sunshine. The balloon was carried out over the lake, disappeared from view, and the fate of the missing men was not known until a portion of the tattered balloon and the body of Greenwood, with his note-book and other articles that helped to identify him, were found on the Michigan shore of the great lake. The balloon had been wrecked and both men had perished in the waves. Donaldson's body was never recovered. An imaginary sketch of this fatal trip was written by John A. Wise, the æronaut, who himself perished in Lake Michigan while attempting to complete a night ascension. He and George Burr started from St. Louis at dusk, and as the ærial ship was vanishing into the

clouds it was seen for the last time. For weeks nothing was heard of the missing men or the balloon. They were thought to be lost in the Michigan prairies. At last Burr's body was found on the east shore of Lake Michigan. Wise's remains were never recovered.

A lady balloonist met with a terrible death at

WASHINGTON H. DONALDSON.

Cuantla, Mexico, some time ago. A great crowd assembled to witness the balloon ascension of Senorita Catalina Georgio, a beautiful girl only seventeen years old. There was no car attached to the balloon, only the trapeze on which the girl performed. The balloon

shot up amid the deafening cheers of the crowd which was present. Catalina, meanwhile, was seen clinging

CATALINA GEORGIO'S FRIGHTFUL DEATH.

to the trapeze and performing daring feats of agility. When the balloon was three-quarters of a mile high it

suddenly exploded and fell to the ground with the unfortunate girl. Her dead body was found horribly crushed and mangled beside the wrecked balloon. The remains were tenderly cared for by the natives.

A frightful balloon accident occurred lately at Courbevoie, near Paris. A large crowd had assembled to witness the novel and perilous ascent of a gymnast called August Navarre, who had volunteered to perform a number of athletic feats on a trapeze suspended from a Montgolfier balloon named the Vidouvillaise. Rejecting the advice of bystanders, Navarre refused to allow himself to be tied to the trapeze. There was no car attached to the balloon. At about five o'clock the Vidouvillaise was let loose from its moorings and rose majestically in the air. Navarre, hanging on to the trapeze, appeared quite confident, and repeatedly saluted the spectators. When, however, the balloon had reached a height of nearly one thousand yards the crowd was horrified to see him suddenly let go the bar and fall. The descent was watched in breathless excitement. At last the body reached the ground, striking with such force that it made a hole in the earth two feet deep, and rebounded four yards. It was crushed and mangled almost beyond recognition. Meanwhile the balloon, freed from its human ballast, shot up with lightning speed, and soon disappeared from view. Late in the evening it burst and fell at Menilmontant, much to the consternation of the inhabitants of that busy Parisian quarter.

The day after Donaldson's fatal ascension, Dave D. Thomas, then press agent for Barnum, and filling the same place still, made a successful ascension. Mr. Thomas is familiar with ballooning, and often laments that the days of ærial ascensions as circus advertisements are past.

While waiting for the performance to begin let us drop into the dressing-tent. It is divided in the middle by a strip of canvas about seven feet wide, and this half space is again divided into dressing-rooms, one for the men, the other for the women. The large space is the green-room of the circus. It is not only that, but it is the property-room. The performers are preparing for the grand entree. Helmets are lying around loose, and wardrobes appear to be in a state of great confusion. Cheap velvet gaily bespangled is quite plentiful. It looks best at a distance. Quantities of white chalk are brought into use, each man's face being highly powdered, his eyebrows blackened, etc. The dressing-room is small and there is apparently much confusion while the performers are donning their respective costumes. But each knows what his duty is, and does it accordingly, without really interfering with anyone else. On the other side is the ladies' room; into this we are not permitted to cast our profane peepers, but we know from exterior knowledge that paint and powder, short dresses and flesh tights are rapidly converting ordinary women into equestrienne angels. Outside of the dressing-rooms are the horses, ranged in regular order. At a given signal the riders appear, mount and enter the ring. As they are dashing about in apparent recklessness let us look more clearly at them. They all look young and fresh, but there are old men in the party who for twenty-five or thirty years have figured in the sawdust ring. Chalk hides their wrinkles, dyestuffs their gray hairs, and skull caps their baldness. Yonder lady who sits her steed gracefully, and who looks as blooming as a rose on a June morning, is not only a mother, but a grandmother. And there is George who was engaged last winter to do "nothing, you

know." He finds his duties embrace riding, leaping, tumbling, object-holding, and occasionally in short times drive a team on the road. There is one rider who was formerly a manager himself. He had a big fortune once, but a few bad seasons swamped it, and he is now glad to take his place as a performer on a moderate salary. Returning to the dressing-room after the entree, we find the clown engaged in putting the finishing touches to his make-up. We must look closely at him to recognize him. He does not seem to be the same fellow we met at the breakfast table, in stylish clothes and a shirt-front ornamented with a California diamond. He has given himself an impossible moustache with charcoal, and has painted bright red spots on his cheeks. You think him a mere boy as he springs into the ring, but he has been a mere boy for many a long year, and his bones are getting stiff and his joints ache in spite of his assumed agility. The "gags" that he repeats and the songs that make you laugh are not funny to him, for he has repeated them in precisely the same inflection for an indefinite number of nights. He comes out to play for the principal act of horsemanship. Meantime in the dressing-room, if it is damp or chilly, the performers are wrapping themselves in blankets or moving about to keep warm. When the bareback rider returns from the ring he usually disrobes, takes a bath and dons his ordinary attire; but the less important performers must keep themselves in readiness to render any assistance which they may be called upon to perform.

There is but little repose for the weary circus people during a season. Frequently they stay but one day in a place, and the next town is fifteen or twenty miles distant. All the properties must be packed up, the helmets and cheap velvet, the tights and the tunics

must be stowed away and the journey made by night. The following day brings a recurrence of the dangers and toil of circus life.

A clown who was importuned by some young ladies of Mill City, Iowa, as they passed the dressing-tent, to let them in, said he'd do it for a kiss from each. There were four in the party and they held a brief consultation when they came back and wanted to know if one kiss wouldn't do.

"Yes, one each," said Mr. Merryman, who had his paint on and looked anything but pretty.

Again they consulted, and at last agreed. They were respectable young ladies and were slow to do anything that might compromise them, still they kissed the clown, who lifted a flap of the tent and passed in each as she paid the osculatory fee. The kisses did his old heart good, and when he went into the ring so fresh and happy did he feel that he actually got off a new and good joke, which is an extraordinary thing for a clown. The clown is pretty much the whole show to the little folks, and there are many grown people who cherish fondly the childish admiration they had had for the retailer of old jokes and singer of poor comic songs. He talks and jumps around as lightly as if he were a young man; but often if the reader could be around when the chalk and the streaks of black and red have been washed off he would see that the light-hearted laugh-provoker is an old man wrinkled and gray, and that he is to be pardoned for not being able to say anything funny that would be new at his time of life. I like everything about a clown, his clothes, his comical hat, his old jokes, his poor voice and his worse songs. He tries to amuse other people's children, and therefore I am glad when I hear he has children of his

own, as the following touching story told in verse has something to say about: —

THE CLOWN'S BABY.

It was out on the western frontier —
The miner's, rugged and brown,
Were gathered around the posters;
The circus had come to town!
The great tent shone in the darkness,
Like a wonderful palace of light,
And rough men crowded the entrance —
Shows didn't come every night.

Not a woman's face among them!
Many a face that was bad,
And some that were only vacant,
And some that were very sad;
And behind the canvas curtain,
In a corner of the place,
The clown with chalk and vermilion,
Was "making up" his face.

A weary-looking woman,
With a smile that still was sweet,
Sewed on a little garment,
With a candle at her feet.
Pantaloons stood ready and waiting;
It was the time for the going on,
But the clown in vain searched wildly
The "property baby" was gone!

He murmured, impatiently hunting,
"It's strange that I cannot find —
There! I've looked in every corner;
It must have been left behind."
The miners were stamping and shouting —
They were not patient men;
The clown bent over the cradle —
"I must take you, little Ben!"

The mother started and shivered,
But trouble and want were near;
She lifted her baby gently,
"You'll be very careful, dear?"

"Careful! You foolish darling —"
How tenderly it was said!
What a smile shone through the chalk and paint —
"I love each hair of his head!"

The noise rose into an uproar,
Misrule for the time was king;
The clown, with a foolish chuckle,
Bolted into the ring.
But as with a squeak and a flourish,
The fiddles closed their tune,
"You hold him as if he was made of glass!"
Said the clown to Pantaloon.

The jovial follow nodded:
"I've a couple myself," he said;
"I know how to handle 'em, bless you!
Old fellow, go ahead!"
The fun grew fast and furious,
And not one of all the crowd
Had guessed the baby was alive,
When he suddenly laughed aloud.

Oh, that baby-laugh! It was echoed
From the benches with a ring,
And the roughest customer there sprung up
With "Boys, it's a real thing!"
The ring was jammed in a minute,
Not a man that did not strive
For "A shot at holding the baby —"
The baby that was "alive!"

He was thronged by kneeling suitors
In the midst of the dusty ring,
And he held his court right royally —
The fair little baby-king —
Till one of the shouting courtiers,
A man with a bold, hard face,
The talk of miles of the country,
And the terror of the place,

Raised the little king on his shoulder,
And chuckled, "Look at that!"
As the baby fingers clutched his hair.
Then "Boys, hand round that hat!"
There never was such a hat-full

Of silver, and gold, and notes;
People are not always penniless
Because they don't wear coats.

And then, "Three cheers for the baby!"
I tell you those cheers were meant;
And the way in which they were given
Was enough to raise the tent.
And there was a sudden silence,
And a gruff old miner said:
"Come boys, enough of this rumpus!
It's time it was put to bed."

So looking a little sheepish,
But with faces strangely bright,
The audience, somewhat lingeringly,
Flocked out into the night.
And the bold-faced leader chuckled,
"He wasn't a bit afraid!
He's as game as he is good-looking —
Boys, that was a show that paid!"

The public at large has but a very vague idea of how a circus is run, and the people, besides the managers and regular employees, who make a living by it. When the tenting season is about to open, a class of people, who in the winter hang about the saloons, variety theatres and gambling hells of the large cities, start for the circuses to bid for what are known as the "privileges," which are, as a rule, understood to embrace not only the candy and lemonade-stands and the side-shows, but all sorts of gambling devices by which the unsuspecting countryman is fleeced out of his earnings, or borrowings, as the case may be. Monte men, thimble-riggers, sweat-cloth dealers, and all classes of gamblers and thieves who have not yet risen to the dignity of "working" the watering-places and summer resorts, look upon the route of a circus as their legitimate field of operation. The circus proprietor who rents the lot upon which his tent or tents are

pitched has the right to sublet such portions of the ground as he does not use, for such purposes as he deems proper, and which will not make him personally amenable to the laws for whatever crimes may be committed there. It has been shown that in many cases the managers not only sell to gamblers the privilege of locating on the ground and robbing the patrons of the circus, but also receive a share of the ill-gotten wealth.

"There are," said Mr. Coup, the circus owner, to an interviewer, "lots of shows with big bank accounts who have made their money by actually robbing their patrons. They used to swindle on the seats, but that is done away with now entirely, or nearly so. Of course, I am not at liberty to mention names, but I could astonish you by designating shows the managers of which have made the greater portion of their money in this way. But a great trick which is being practised is this: A man is sent ahead of the show who is not known to have any connection whatever with it. In fact, he denies that he has anything to do with it, and yet he is really employed by the managers. This man canvasses the town and finds some man who has a big bank account and who is gullible enough to confide in strangers. The agent makes his acquaintance, gets into his confidence, and then with a great show of secrecy informs him how he can make a pile of money when the circus comes along. The innocent citizen bites at the bait and is steered against a gambling scheme either inside or outside of the tent, and loses often large sums of money. Perhaps he is a man whose social standing prevents him from making his loss known, or, more frequently, he fails to suspect the agent, who blusters around and declares that he, too, has lost money on the scheme. And thus the show goes from town to town, making almost as much by

stealing from its patrons as it does at the ticket wagon. There are shows which make from $30,000 to $40,000 a season in this way and that goes a good way toward paying for their printing, and is quite an item. I have made war on these fellows for years and am determined to keep it up. If I cannot run a show without having a lot of gambling schemes attached to it, why then I'll stop running a show. I abolished everything of the kind last season, even down to the selling of lemonade in the seats. I allow lemonade to be sold now, but the men are watched carefully and the first one caught swindling my patrons, off goes his head."

"Do you not find it difficult to keep gamblers and confidence men away from your show?"

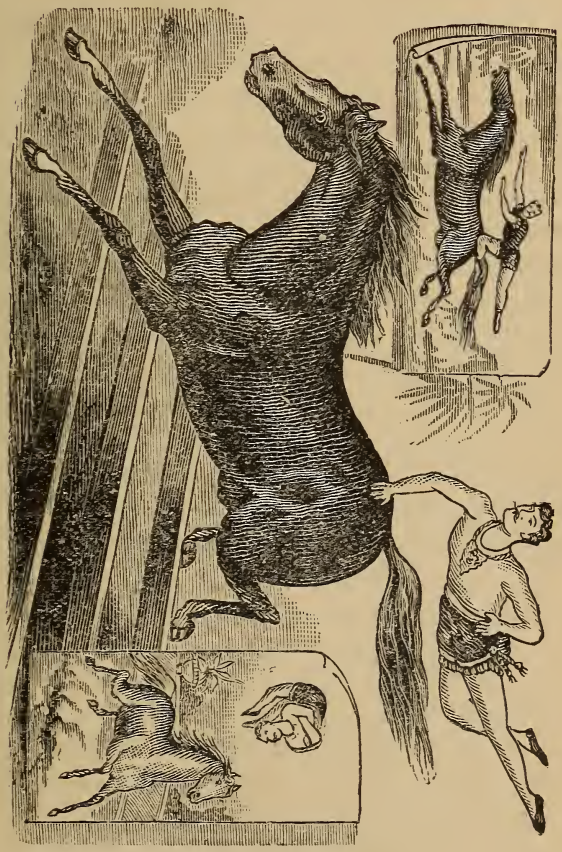
"I did at first, but it is now known among them that I will not allow it and they keep away. My life has been threatened several times just on account of this, but I still live and still propose to keep up the fight. I have been offered as high as $1,000 a week for the privilege to rob my patrons by camp-followers, so you can see that the privilege is worth something. In Georgia a gang threatened publicly to kill me on sight for refusing to let them hang around my tents, but some of my men went for them and cleaned them out very effectually. The side-show privileges are sold only on condition that no gambling shall be carried on in the tents and that the patrons shall not be swindled in any way. The side-shows can be made to pay without robbery. Last season the side-shows that traveled with my show, made $75,000, which was more than I made."

CHAPTER XL.

ACROBATICS AND EQUESTRIANISM.

Nearly every man connected with the ring work of a circus is an acrobat of one kind or other. His ability may be limited to turning a single somersault, still he will be brought into the arena with the rest of the company and opportunity will be afforded him to do his best. It is not expected, however, to recruit the ranks from such a class. Children must be trained to the profession, and a long and arduous training it requires. If their parents are professionals their studies will be all the more severe, and cuffs and blows will be the only encouragement given their struggling children. Fathers have been known to beat their sons, to kick them in the presence of the audience, and to add other and severer punishment when the young acrobat reaches home. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children could find plenty to do in preventing brutal parents from abusing their little folks, if not in putting an end entirely to the swift and rough training that boys are put through in order that they may be hired out or leased to circus managers. In New York I understand that broken-down ring performers have schools in which boys are taught every branch of the circus business, just as there are riding schools where young men and young women may learn pad-riding and go even as far as riding bareback. The schools for acrobats are usually conducted by cruel, heartless fellows who urge the pupils to their tasks

with a club, and while forgetting to say a kind word when the pupil has done well, will never fail to say a



BAREBACK RIDING.

harsh one when any mistake has been made. These places are filled up with all the appliances of a gym-

nasium — bars, ropes, weights, trapezes, tight-rope, etc. Circus managers in want of talent for small shows going South or West apply here and take their choice of the boys. A bargain is quickly made and the child, for many of them are still mere children, goes forth to join the throng engaged from April until October in amusing the public in the sawdust arena.

When the child gets into the circus ring there need be hope of no further sympathy. Its task is set and must be done at all hazards. A failure one time to accomplish a feat must be followed by another and another attempt until the feat is at last satisfactorily presented. Olive Logan was at a circus performance at Cincinnati at which she witnessed an extraordinary instance of cruelty on the part of a circus proprietor to a child rider. The circus was owned and managed by a certain clown. The clown-proprietor, Miss Logan goes on to say, introduced a little girl to the audience, saying that she would exhibit her skill in riding. He stated that the horse was somewhat unused to the ring and if it should happen that the rider fell, no one need entertain any apprehension of serious accident, as the arena was soft and injury would be impossible. It was surely an unhappy introduction for the child, and calculated to fill her with fear and doubt. The child whirled rapidly round the ring two or three times, using neither rein nor binding strap. She stood on one foot, then changed to the other. After this she was called upon to jump the stretchers. Had her horse been well trained, the feat would have been no very difficult one. But she became entangled in the cloth and fell to the ground, under the horse's feet. She was placed again on the back of the horse and compelled once more to try the feat. Her fall had not given her new confidence and she fell a second time.

Evidently much against her inclination and in spite of her trembling and her tears, nature's protest against barbarity, she was tossed again to her place. But her nerve had gone. She was utterly demoralized. Judgment of distance, and faith in herself were lost. Again she attempted to execute the leap. Again she fell to the ground, striking heavily upon her head. She rolled directly under the horse's feet and only by a sheer chance escaped a terrible death. The audience, — more merciful than those within the ring, by this time had been thoroughly aroused and indignant. Cries and shouts were heard from all quarters: "Shame! shame!" "That'll do!" "Take her out! take her out!" came up from every side. It would not answer to disregard such commands, and with a smile the ring master went to the child, raised her from the dust where she lay, and led her, crying and sobbing, to the dressing-tent.

TRAPEZE.

The men and women who perform at dizzy heights on the trapeze and flying rings frequently meet with terrible accidents. Still the difficulty of these feats is being constantly increased, and performers, not satisfied with having their eyes open during their perilous

flight from one trapeze to another, envelope their heads in sacks, and although not wholly blinding themselves, very materially interfere with the vision, which in all such instances should not be obstructed. A typical accident of the trapeze kind happened at a performance of old John Robinson's circus at South Pueblo, Colorado, on June 12, 1882. While the Alfredo Family were performing on the trapeze, the stake which supports the rope pulled out of the ground, which had been softened by the afternoon storm, and let the performers — three in number, William, Lewis, and his wife, Emma Alfredo — suddenly to the ground. The act is a sort of double bicycle and trapeze performance. William propels a bicycle back and forth on a line stretched from pole to pole, and Lewis and Emma perform on two trapeze-bars suspended from the bicycle. When the stake pulled up last night the rope collapsed just at the moment that Lewis was hanging by his feet from the lower bar and Emma from the upper, both straight down, with arms folded. Emma caught herself on the lower bar and the side ropes, but her husband fell straight to the ground, alighting on the back of his head, the fall being twelve or fourteen feet. He was at once removed to his dressing-room, and the physicians who were summoned said that his spine was injured. Half an hour later he was removed to a hotel, where he died at four P. M., June 13th.

A gymnast who fell from a trapeze in New Orleans gave the following account of his sensations: "Amid the sea of faces before me I looked for a familiar one, but in vain, and, turning, I stepped back to the rope by which we ascended to the trapeze, and going up hand over hand was soon seated in my swinging perch. As I looked down I caught sight of a face in one of the

boxes, that at once attracted my attention. It was that of a beautiful girl, with sweet blue eyes, and golden hair falling unconfined over her shoulders in heavy, waving masses. Her beautiful eyes, turned toward me, expressed only terror at the seeming danger of the performer, and for the moment I longed to assure her of my perfect safety, but my brother was by my side and we began our performance. In the pauses for breath I could see that sweet face, now pale as death, and the blue eyes staring wide open with fear, and I dreaded the effect of our finish, which — being the drop act — gives the uninitiated the impression that both performers are about to be dashed headlong to the stage. Having completed the double performance I ascended to the upper bar, and, casting off the connect, we began our combination feats. While hanging by my feet in the upper trapeze, my brother being suspended from my hands (the lower bar being drawn back by a super), I felt a slight shock, and the rope began slowly to slip past my foot. My heart gave a grand jump, and then seemed to stop, as I realized our awful situation. The lashing which held the bar had parted, the rope was gliding round the bar, and in another moment we should be lying senseless on the stage. I shouted 'under' to the terrified 'super,' who instantly swung the bar back to its place, and I dropped my brother on it as the last strand snapped and I plunged downward. I saw the lower bar darting toward me and I made a desperate grasp at it, for it was my last chance. I missed it! Down through the air I fell, striking heavily on the stage. The blow rendered me senseless and my collar bone was broken. I was hurried behind the scenes, and soon came to my senses. My first thought was that I must go back and go through my performance

at once, and I actually made a dash for the stage — but I was restrained, and it was many weeks before I was able to perform again."

The circus-goers of a decade ago were accustomed to tight-rope and slack-wire performances in the ring, when old men and young women, emulative of the cel-

MDME. LASALLE.

ebrated Blondin, went through some wonderful evolutions in mid-air. Now the tight-rope and loose wire have both almost entirely disappeared from the ring, and only in the small shows are they given a place in the programme. Still there are many excellent performers in this line who find employment on the variety stage among specialty people. The best of these is Zanfretti, the pantomime clown, who though an old

man displays wonderful agility when with balance-pole in hand he finds himself at the half-way point on his rope. Ladies who have taken to the hempen path have attained prominence as rope-walkers. One of the most beautiful and at the same time dangerous, of the performances that the small shows offer to their audiences is that of Madame Lasalle, who places her little eight-year-old daughter in a wheelbarrow filled with flowers, and on a rope thirty feet above the ground without net beneath and with nothing but hard ground to receive both in case of a fall, trundles the barrow over a long rope while the people below look up in breathless fear lest the barrow tip and a dreadful accident result before the feat is accomplished. Tight-rope walking, however, is not nearly so difficult as it appears to be. The performer needs steady nerves, a cool eye, firm limbs and a balance-pole, the last-named article being the most essential. Training is required, of course, but it is not of the rigorous and protracted kind that other feats demand.

The training of riders is not so difficult or attended with such dangers, although it is perilous enough. If a circus-rider has a son or daughter he wishes to bring up for the ring he will begin by carrying the child, as soon as it is strong enough, upon the horse with him, thus accustoming it to standing upon the animal in motion; but if a boy or girl is taken up at an age when it is no longer easy to carry him around the ring on the back of a horse, he is put in training with what the circus people call "the mechanic." This is a beam extending out from a pivoted centre-pole and having a rope hanging down at the edge of the ring with a strap at the end which is fastened around the pupil's waist. The rope is long enough to allow the pupil to stand

upon the back of an animal, and by means of its support he is kept in an upright position until he gets accustomed to the motion of a horse, and is prevented from falling should he miss his footing. He begins with a pad on the back of a gentle animal, and keeps on with "the mechanic" until he is able to stand alone on the horse, from which time on the pad is discarded and the pupil goes it bareback. Ed. Showles, a good rider and prominent in his line, told me that it takes about six months to break a boy in so that he will be able to ride fairly, but that a girl may be taught in three months.

This training goes on during the winter months while the circus is in quarters. A small ring is always a department of the winter quarters, and in this the trained animals are kept in practice and new ones are broken in, the whip being freely used upon all in giving them their lessons. A horse that is intended for the educated class after having acquired the ordinary manœuvres, for instance, must learn to get up on his hind legs and paw the air with the fore legs, as we see them in pictures of the Ukraine stallions, etc. To do this the animal must have his haunches strengthened. By whipping the fore legs he is made gradually to rise on the hind ones. The horse finds it difficult at first, but judicious whipping gets him up in the air at last and the sight of the threatening whip keeps him there as long as there is strength in his haunches to keep him up.

"The work of the leading equestrienne is one of the most laborious in the whole range of the circus profession. It requires physical courage of the highest order, combined with great power of endurance and a capacity for adopting oneself to a constant change of scene and surrounding. People who witness only the

brilliant performances in the ring in an atmosphere laden with light and music, little dream of the wearisome toil and drudgery which precede them."

The speaker was Miss Lilly Deacon, a fair-haired English lady, with the form of a Juno, who arrived in this country from London sometime ago to fill an engagement as leading equestrienne in Forepaugh's circus. As she appeared in the parlor in an interview with a Philadelphia reporter, she might naturally have been taken for the preceptress of some fashionable English boarding-school, or the daughter of some stiff old country squire of Kent or Sussex — or anybody, in fact, rather than the daring rider whose performances have bewildered and startled the circus-going multitude of London, Paris, and Berlin. In feature and manner her appearance was that of the English gentlewoman, while her conversation throughout revealed a delicacy of thought and expression common only to the well-bred lady.

"The training necessary to success in equestrian performances," continued Miss Deacon, "is monotonous in the extreme and in some parts very dangerous. None but those in rugged health ever withstand it, and no one without a perfect physical organization should undertake it. The ordinary exercises of the riding-school are trifles as compared with the tasks imposed in professional training. When a woman has obtained all the knowledge to be acquired in a riding-school, she has only got the rudiments of real equestrian art. She must then enter the circus ring and familiarize herself with the duties required of her there. She must be prepared to endure falls and bruises without number, together with frequent scoldings and corrections from the instructors. No woman, unless she be possessed of extraordinary natural skill, ought to ap-

pear in the ring before an audience until she has graduated from a riding-school, and then practised in the

CIRCUS RIDERS.

ring four or five hours every day for at least six months. Those six months will be a period of torture and weariness to her, but she must undergo them or run the risk of

almost certain failure and humiliation upon her first appearance in public.

"The best equestrian instructor in Europe — in fact the only one of established reputation — is M. Salmonsky of Berlin. He is one of the grandest horsemen in the world, and in his great circus includes some of the finest stock on the continent. He saw me first in London, my native place, many years ago when I was performing with my brothers and sisters in Henley's Regent Street circus, and offered to take me with him to Berlin and complete my training. I accepted, and entered his circus at the German capital, where I received the most careful instruction he could give me.

"M. Salmonsky would send me into the ring with his most spirited horses every day and stand by to direct my exercises. Sometimes I thought I should never survive the terrible discipline, and often thought I should go back to London and content myself with being a second-rate rider, but the kindness of my good old instructor softened the innumerable bumps and bruises I received, and I at last triumphed. Emperor William and the crown prince attended the circus the night I made my debut, and complimented me formally and personally from their box.

"M. Salmonsky's course of training is very rigid, and that accounts for its thoroughness. The pupil must surrender wholly to the instructor and become very much as a ball of wax in his hands. At the outset, however, the scholar must obtain complete mastery of her horses. Fear is a quality utterly hostile to successful equestrianism, and unless the pupil can banish it at the start, she had better give up her ambition and abandon the profession. She will never

succeed so long as she is afraid either of herself or her horses.

"But, as I said before, no one unacquainted with the dangerous preparatory instruction of an equestrienne has any proper estimate of the toil and weariness which her performances represent. One never knows the boundless capacity of the human frame for pains and aches until one has gone into training for circus-riding. What, with unruly horses, uncomfortable saddles, and the violent exercise involved, five or six hours of practice every day for months is certain to do one of two things — it either kills the pupil or brings her up to the perfection of physical womanhood. The hours for practice adopted by M. Salmonsky were in the forenoon — generally from eight to twelve, with, perhaps, another hour or two in the evening. To withstand this course one must dress loosely and become a devotee to plain living and the laws of hygiene. Any neglect of those principles, or any great loss of sleep usually results in broken health and professional failure.

"A great many persons who have the idea that the life of a circus star is a happy one — that it is a round of gorgeous tulle, tinsel, and ring-master-embellished splendor — would be sadly shocked if they could get a glimpse of the real thing. These people are mistaken. It is really a life of hard work at pretty much all hours of the day. When the splendid Mlle. Peerless isn't speeding around the ring, lashing her spirited bare-back horse to fury, amid the plaudits of admiring thousands, she is mending her tights, stitching tinsel on her costume, annointing her bruises with balsam, or practising. The practice of the circus rider is like the rehearsal of the actor, only more so, for while the actor has only to rehearse until his first

performance and then can go on playing a part without further trouble, the rider must put in an hour or two every day to keep her joints limber and her muscles in proper trim. But for this daily practice the performances of our circuses would be the theatre of many a tragedy instead of the scenes of mirth and gladness that they are.

The fascination that the circus has for people who know nothing about its hardships, is illustrated in the case of a Georgia lady, who lived in luxury, and whose husband was numbered among the most prominent of the State's citizens. She became imbued with a desire that she would like to sport tights and gauze dresses, and whirl about the ring on a spirited horse, so she struck up acquaintance with an equestrian, who happened to come along with a fly-by-night show, and eloped with him. The husband followed the show to Texas some months afterwards, and had an interview with his wife, who had became an equestrienne in a small way, doing a pad-riding act in each performance. An interview with the lady failed to make her see her folly. The husband now grew desperate, went away and hired a lot of cowboys whom he took to the show with the understanding that as soon as Mlle. Eulalia (the wife's adopted name) put in an appearance they were to rush forward, and seizing her carry her from the tent. When the lady appeared and had been lifted upon the horse by the clown, and the ringmaster was touching up the heels of the animal to get him into a funeral jog, the husband and cowboys advanced. The husband seized his wife, dragged her from the horse, and while the cowboys fought back the performers and attaches he got her into a carriage and drove her away, leaving the audience in the wildest state of excitement. Kind words and gentle treat-

ment brought the woman back to her senses, and she is now in her Georgia home and does not want any more circus experience.

A Paris correspondent tells us that the funeral of that charming circus rider, Emilie Loisset, who was

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killed in April, 1882, was a Parisian event. The poor girl had long inhabited the United States, and had the freedom of manner and self-respect which so often distinguish the American young lady. She was on horseback one of the most graceful creatures imaginable. The figure was lithe, but without meagerness. Her poses in the saddle were simply exquisite, and they

appeared unstudied. The features were elegantly formed, and the eyes expressed a brave, kind soul. Emilie Loisset was more popular than Sarah Bernhardt had ever been in Paris. Her less successful rivals in the circus were brought by her exceeding amiability to pardon her public triumphs. She did not seem ever to excite jealousy. On the days and nights on which she performed the circus was crowded with fashionable people. There was no amount of wealth that she might not have possessed had she not been a proud, strong-willed, self-respecting girl. She had no carriage and used to walk from the hippodrome to the Rue Oberkampf, where she had a small lodging on the fifth floor. A number of aristocratic and plutocratic admirers used to escort her to the door, through which none of them were allowed by her to pass. She aspired to create for herself a happy home and to marry somebody whom she could love and esteem. Her sister, Clotilde, is the morganatic wife of the Prince de Reuss, brother of the German ambassador at Constantinople, and is looked up to in her family circle. The admiration of the Empress Elizabeth for Emilie was increased by the fact that the charming circus rider spurned the address of the crown prince of Austria.

He was very much in love with her when she was in Germany, a couple of years ago, and would have forsworn marriage if she would have consented to be his Dubarry. She did not like the young man, and told him so. The empress, when she was here, used to make appointments to ride in the Bois with Emilie. Her majesty thought the ecuyere charming to look at, but wanting in firmness of hand. The horse on which she rode with imperial Elizabeth in the shaded alleys of the Bois was the one that occasioned her death by

rolling over on her and driving the crutch of the saddle into her side. The august lady noticed the hardness of the brute's mouth, and the teasing and at the same time irresolute way in which Emilie held her bridle.

Emilie Loisset aimed at classic purity of style. There was nothing sensational in her manner. Her imperial friend Elizabeth thought her the most lady-like person she had seen in Paris. Her gestures were simple, her address amiable, and there was seriousness even in her smiles. Members of the Jockey Club spoke to her hat in hand. Her death was entirely due to the hard mouth of her horse. At a rehearsal the horse turned round, made for the stable, and, finding the door shut against him, reared up on his hind legs. Balance was lost, the horse rolled over, and the crutch of the saddle smashed in the ribs upon the lungs and heart. Poor Emilie had the courage in this state to walk to the infirmary, and when she was taken home to mount five flights of stairs.

CHAPTER XLI.

A ROMANCE OF THE RING.

There is a great deal of romance in the life of a circus performer; and as the theatrical world is often penetrated in search of subjects rich in fiction, so, too, romancers enter the circus ring to find a hero or heroine for an o'er-true tale. In a Western paper I found the following pretty and touching story, which had evidently been copied from some other paper without credit, and which, as it deals with circus life, and particularly that feature of it we have just left — equestrianism — I believe it will be found interesting, and in reproducing it regret that I am unacquainted with the source whence it came, as the publication in which it originally appeared certainly deserves mention: —

The North American Consolidated Circus was to show in Shadowville. Shadowville was named after a legend of a haunted shadow that envelopes the town after sunset; and long before the canvas flaps were drawn back and the highly gilded ticket-wagon, with the "electric ticket seller" was ready to change greenbacks for the red-backed "open sesame," the ground and two streets leading to the lot were crowded with an anxious, expectant, peanut-munching, chewing-gum-masticating collection. The large posters and handbills announced in highly colored style the arrival of "Miss Nannie Florenstein, the most wonderful bareback rider in the known world!" while the little

"gutter snipes" simply begged the people to "wait for Miss Nannie Florenstein."

The "doors are thrown open," and in less than twenty minutes the immense canvas is rising and falling with the concentrated respirations of five thousand people. Such a crowd! Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, or Bret Harte would have been in ecstacies at the curious collection of faces, costumes, and vernacular, not to mention the expressions of genuine enthusiasm or surprise at the entries into the ring of even the sawdust rakers.

The band has ended its attempt at one of Strauss's waltzes, and the master of ceremonies, Mr. Lunt, walks consequentially into the ring, bowing to the vast concourse, who applaud at — they scarce know what.

"This way, Mr. Oliphant."

"Aye, aye, sir! 'Ere hi ham. Ah, sir! this bevy of smiling faces is refreshing even to the sawdust. [Applause.] What shall we have now, sir?" asks the jester (?) as he throws his hat in the air and catches it on — the ground.

"Mr. Tom Karl."

"Not the tender singer, sir?"

"You mean tenor singer! No! The pad rider, sir."

"It's all the same, Mr. Lunt; but time's flying. Ah! here is Karl! Now, then, Mr. Karl, that's the way I used to ride — (aside) in my mind."

And so it goes. One act after another, each one showing agility, daring, and skill; while the old jester and ring master entertain the crowd and rest the performers.

"Miss Nannie Florenstein, ladies and gentlemen, will now have the honor of appearing before you in

her wonderful bareback act — riding a wild, untamed horse without either bridle, saddle or surcingle. An act never before accomplished — although often attempted — by any lady in the world! Miss Nannie Florenstein!''

A lithe, pretty little lady, with an anxious, careworn face, stepped into the ring, and, acknowledging the applause of the audience, vaulted lightly on the back of her black horse, and quicker than a flash of lightning was off. Around and around the forty-two-foot circle she goes, pirouetting, posturing, and doing a really graceful and wonderful act.

She is what all the papers had claimed she would be. There is a spirit of reckless daring flashing from her dark eyes as she jumps "the banners," and even the old and stoical ring master watches her anxiously as she attempts one act more daring than the rest — that of standing on her tip-toes on the horse's hind-quarters and slowly pirouetting as the animal continues his mad career.

Suddenly she reels. She has lost her balance. Over she goes. Her head has struck the ring board. A shriek of a thousand anxious voices rends the air, and all is confusion.

She is bleeding, bleeding profusely from a cut in her forehead. A hundred hands are ready to convey her to the dressing-tent.

A rough-hewn specimen of a man suddenly appears in their midst. Where he came from or what moved him no one knows.

"Stand back! stand back, I say, and give the gal air! Do ye hear?''

Instinctively every one obeys him.

"Yere's a doctor. Doctor, this gal I know. 'Tend ter her, an' look ter me for the perkisites.''

A quiet, confident-looking gentleman, Dr. Adams, is already by her side, stopping the flow of blood, and under his directions she is conveyed to her dressing-tent, the miner, tall, athletic, and with immense, sunburned beard, following anxiously in the rear.

The performance has been renewed and the crowd are forgetting the accident, when the miner appears in the ring dragging after him a performer, Monsieur La Forge, as he is called, "the strongest man in the world," who resists with all his might the iron muscles that are clinched like a vice on his collar.

A trapeze act is being performed, but all eyes are on the miner and his victim, not one of the performers having interfered, as they all dislike and fear La Forge for his bullying, bragadocio character.

"Leddies and gintlemin, this yere coyote am ther cause on that yere young gal er falling. I knows 'em both. He wanted ter kill her. Yes, yer did, ye skunk! He stole her when she war a chile from my sister. I knowed him; I knowed her. He hearn I was coming ter-day and he sed that he'd kill her. Lay down, yer he-bar! Lay down, I say.

"I was standing close on ter this ring when I seed him fire sumthing at her. She turned her putty eyes to see what it wur and over she went. Mister performers, ye'll 'scuse me fur interruptin' yer performances, but I thought I'd let these yere know who this skunk is. Now, then, Meester Ler Forgey, alias John Rafferty, what have yer got to say to my statement?"

"Hang him! Hang him! Strangle him!" broke in the crowd as they left their seats and rushed for the ring.

"Back! Back! Yer shan't hang him! Do yer hear? Ther fust man that raises a finger to throttle

him, I'll pile in that yere saw dust! Do yer hear?"

His revolver levelled at the angry, grumbling crowd held them back. They all knew him. All knew old Ned Struthers, the most daring and best shot on the frontier; a man whom the redskins feared more than a whole army of trained United States soldiers; a remnant of a race of men who could settle the Indian question quicker, better, and with less expense than a whole army of Indian whiskey-selling agents; a man who they knew was dangerous and vindictive when aroused. So all kept their distance.

"Now, thin, yer goll-darned skunk, git up off yer knees! Git!"

"The doctor says Miss Florenstein is dying!" the ring master, pale and breathless, announced as he ran into the ring.

"Dying, did yer say, Mister? Oh, yer mean rattlesnake! Pray she may live — pray! Ef she dies, I'll hang yer scalp on her coffin! Do you hear?"

Poor Rafferty, by the intervention of the sheriff, who had a free pass to the show, and was present, was released from Ned Struthers's hold and taken away to the lock-up while Ned hurried to the bedside of his sister's child, Miss Nannie Florenstein.

She tossed and moaned upon her improvised bed of straw, an anguish-stricken few around her; for she was loved by the company. Her lustreless eyes would open appealingly, and looking with tear-bedimmed expression at some familiar face near her, try to smile them a recognition — a sad, painful recognition.

The doctor knelt beside her with one hand on her pulse and one on her bandaged forehead, and as he noticed the weary, faint pulsation, would shake his head, prophetic of her death.

The flaps of her tent are raised, and old Ned Struthers, hat in hand, looks in, asking in a mute way permission to enter. The doctor sees him and beckons him to her side.

Nannie hears his footstep as it crushes the straw beneath his weight, and, slowly opening her eyes, looks at him in an indifferent, inquisitive way. Suddenly they brighten; she closes them as if to think — in a minute opens them with a glad smile of affectionate recognition lighting up her handsome, pale face, raises her weak hand, beckons him to her, and as he takes her little fingers into his brawny palm she pulls him gently to her and whispers something in his ear. She cannot speak loud.

Old Ned cannot keep back the tears as they slowly run down his bronzed cheek and are lost in the shadow of his beard. He has now knelt beside her and answers her whispered question.

"Yes, little un! I'm yer uncle — yer loving uncle! Get well, little un, and I'll take care on yer." He could say no more.

She, poor little bruised body, turns to him a grateful smile of affection, and again drawing him to her, kisses his wrinkled old forehead, while the group who are silent witnesses of the scene turn away their heads in silent sorrow.

"Say, Doctor, can't we move her to sum more kumfortable quarters? — to ther hotel? Her aunty lives some twenty miles from yere, and I'll send for her."

Again Nannie opened her eyes, looking anxiously at the doctor, but a shadow darkened the tent opening and a young, handsome-faced man enters; instantly her eyes meet his, and she beckons him to her, and drawing him down to her side, whispers a few words in his ear. His face brightens, and turning to Ned —

who is curiously watching this last scene — puts out a hard, muscular hand as he says : —

" Mr. Struthers, Nannie tells me you are her uncle. I am engaged to be married to Nan."

Old Ned eyed him curiously and doubtingly as he replies : —

" Wal, sir ! what Nan tells yer is gospel truth. I'm her uncle ; but about the other part of the bizness I ain't so sartin " — but seeing Nan's troubled face appealingly turned to him, he continues : " But was she right? Nan oughter be married. Ef she was she wouldn't be yere, a jumping on bar horses' backs, he showing her — I mean, sir, she oughter be at hum, and I'd do thar barback ridin' for ther crowd — thet is, our leetle crowd, ter hum ; but 'scuse me, we must move Nan — what's yer bizness, sir? "

" I'm in the same business as Nan ; we were brought up together, trained together, and next week we were to be married."

" Together, I serpose? " laughingly answered Ned, as he saw Nan brighten and smile at her intended's words.

Nan was carefully removed to a hotel, the proprietor of the circus defraying all the necessary expenses of a large room and extra attendance. Old Ned was about to start for his sister's, Nan's aunt, to attend her, as the doctor had taken a more hopeful view of her recovery if properly nursed, when he, entering the bar-room of the hotel, preparatory to starting, was suddenly made aware that he was the target of at least a dozen eyes, all staring with a perplexed gaze at him. First he thought it might be something in his dress, but this he quickly ascertained was not so ; then he surveyed his face in the mirror opposite. At last he got angry.

"What are ye all staring at? Do I owe enny on yer ennything, eh?" He was defiant now.

"No, Mr. Struthers, you don't owe anybody here anything that I am aware of! We have congregated here to congratulate you. We have heard you had recovered your niece and your mine, and we come, as fellow-townsmen, to congratulate you." It was the town justice who spoke.

"My neese, pardner, I've diskivered, but ther mine I wanter sell out to-morrow, and ——"

"Mr. Struthers, here's a telegram for you." A messenger boy handed him a telegram.

"Read that fir me, jidge, will yer?" And he handed the telegram to the justice of the peace.

"Mr. Struthers, it is an offer from Col. Allston, of San Francisco. He says: 'I will give you three hundred thousand dollars and one quarter share for your Red Gulch mine. Answer. Pay in cash.' That's all, sir, only the news has been on the street for half an hour!"

"Wal, I declare that's prime news! Let's take a drink, boys. Squire, you jist answer that tillygram, will yer? Tell Kurnel Allston I'll take the offer, and he may send the cash yere. Say, boys, thet's gud news, but I must tell my neese!"

"Mr. Struthers, before you go will you tell us about your niece?"

"Sartlingly! Yer see boys, abeout fifteen years agone my sister died an' left har leetle one — Nannie was her name — left her with a widder woman in 'Fresco. I war away in Nevady; hed only been gone three months. The young un war only nine y'ars old, an' when I got thet news I war struck dumb. Yer see, my sister hed heart disease. I started with my pack mule fir 'Fresco, but whin I 'rived thar the young un

and the widder war gone. I hearn she hed gone to Brazzel with her husband, a man named Rafferty, a sirkus performer, so I waited. Abeout thet time I was takin sick with small-pox, and whin I got well I could not get no news on thet young un, so I gave up thar trial. Abeout one month ago I war at Red Gulch Canyon, er staking off my 'find,' whin Jim Parkins, my ole pard, wrote me from San Yosea thet my leetle un war with this yere sirkus, and thet her name was Nannie Florenstein. So I got on thar trail, found this yere Rafferty hed her as his'n — or raether his darter — got $200 a week fir her an' gave her nuthing, so I lit on him yere to-day, drapped on him foul, and ther war wolf meat in the air. But he crawled, an' now I'm going ter send him ter prison. I think he can do more good breakin' stuns than performing on cannons — eh?''

The crowd — it was a crowd by the time he had finished — gave the old man three rousing cheers and he escaped from them, hastening to Nannie's room to find her wonderfully improved and able to sit up.

* * * * * * * * *

The circus left Shadowville without "Miss Nannie Florenstein," and to-day she has returned from a village church a blooming bride, "Frank Grace, the celebrated bareback rider," being her happy husband.

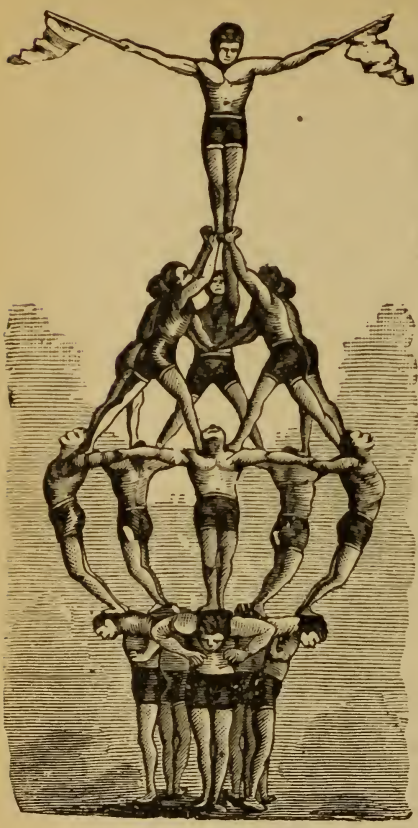
Old Ned occupies a seat in their carriage.

"Uncle, you have made me a happy woman and Frank a happy man.''

"Yas, leetle un, I serpose so. It is better than bar'-back riding, ain't it?''

"Yes, uncle. But how can I thank you for all the wealth you have showered on me, and for the home you have bought us?'' again asked Nan, as she kissed his happy face.

"Wall, leetle un, I don't kinder want eny thanks, only plese don't — I mean ef yer hev eny children, leetle un, don't trust 'em ter eny widders ter sell 'em out ter sirkus people fur bar'-back ridin'."



A HUMAN PYRAMID.

"You may be certain of that Uncle Struthers," answered Frank, as he kissed his bride.

"Wall, I hope so. Enyhow, if yer do, see they doesn't fall from thar horse's back into a rich uncle's pocket — eh, you little pet!" And the carriage stopped in front of their new home, happy, bright and cheerful.

CHAPTER XLII.

LEAPING AND TUMBLING.

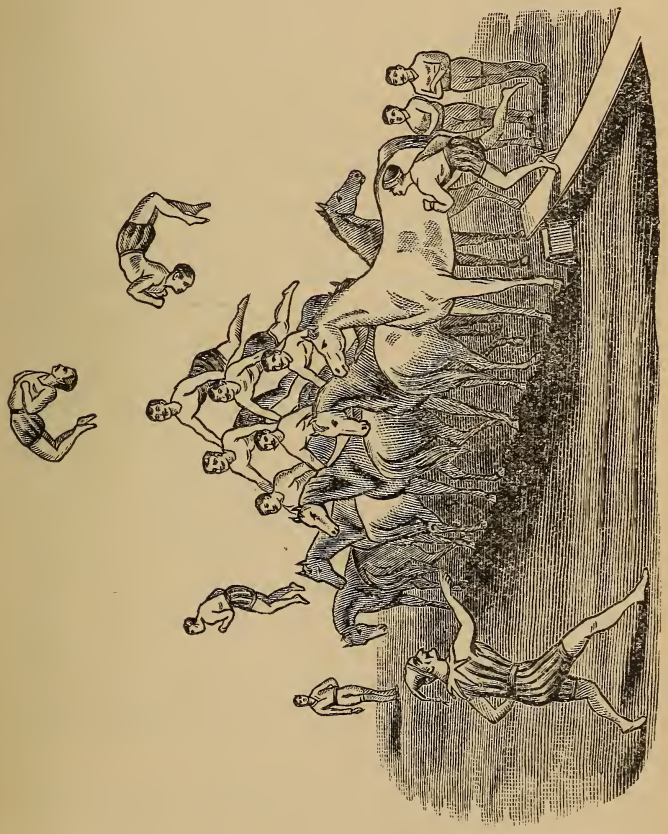
One of the great features of all travelling tent-shows and, indeed, in the long years a very prominent feature of the legitimate show when juggling, tumbling and things of that kind were either interspersed between the acts of a tragedy, or filled the intermission between the tragedy and farce, was the acrobatic artist, the athlete, the gymnast, or whatever else you may feel like calling him. At the beginning of this century there were several renowned acrobats, and the number has increased to such an extent — and the general desire for exhibitions of physical skill — that acrobatics have taken possession of many fields. The song and dance man aims to introduce as much as possible of it into his act or sketch, and even the equestrian and equestrienne attempts and succeeds in combining perilous somersaulting with skilful riding, and the nearer the performer goes towards breaking his neck the better the people seem to like it.

The athlete who displayed his prowess or skill in the arenas of ancient Rome or Athens was a much more important personage than the circus performer of to-day. It was the passionate love of manly sports which produced the matchless Greek form, the acme of physical perfection. The successful athlete, acrobat, or charioteer of two thousand years ago was a popular hero, and his triumphs, loves, and career were immortalized in poetry and song. A successful ath-

lete was then of more importance than the congressman of to-day. And yet the modern athlete, while occupying a much lower social scale than the ancient practitioner, is just as strong, and the acrobat of to-day is even more skilful than his classic predecessor. The circus performer thinks nothing of executing feats which no later than a century ago were deemed impossible.

Nearly every man and boy who appears in the circus arena now-a-days is counted a member of the corps that does both grand and lofty tumbling. In small shows the corps of leapers and tumblers is increased by the addition of several dummies who can do little more than turn a hand-spring or a forward somersault either on the sawdust or from the spring-board. Many of the best acrobats have begun their studies in the open streets by walking on their hands or hammering their heels against the bare bricks in somersaults or hand-springs; others have been educated in the ring following their fathers and sometimes grandfathers into the arenic profession. From the ranks of these two classes some of the best acrobats and athletes have sprung. I can recall several very good leapers and tumblers, whose earliest efforts were witnessed and wondered at in some vacant lot or friendly stable yard — where spring-boards were improvised and feats as dangerous as "revolving twice in the air without alighting on their feet" — as the ring master usually announces this act, in his most grandiloquent style — were attempted at the peril of young and frail necks. So too with many horizontal bar and trapeze performers. But to come back to the leapers and tumblers. The band gives a flourish and in they troop for the "ground act." They form in a row, and bow to the audience and then away each one whirls in a hand-

spring and front somersault. Then they retire and singly, the men begin to tumble backward and forward across and about the ring, heads and feet are kept in a whirl until the final effort is reached, when the clown, who is frequently as good an artist in the business as



the rest of his tumbling confreres, chases the swiftest of the number around the ring, the clown winding him up while the latter rolls like a wheel, in back handsprings along the inner edge of the ring. A short in-

terval, and the leapers come in,—the same men as those who have done the tumbling,—bow, and retire to follow each other rapidly down an inclined plane, bound from the spring-board, and after a forward somersault land safely and gracefully in the soft mattress beyond. One, two, three, four, and five horses are brought in and placed in front of the spring-board while the mattress is drawn farther away. As the number of horses increases and the peril and distance grow greater, the number of leapers decrease till at last three appear, or perhaps more horses are added to the equine line, the mattress is placed at the farther end of the ring and the ring-master — sometimes it is a lecturer like Harry Evarts, the "little Grant orator," of Coup's show for the past and present season — mounts a pedestal near the entrance, and with stentorian voice remarks: "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Batchellor, the champion leaper of the world, will now throw a double somersault over nineteen horses [sometimes fewer elephants are employed] — that is to say, the gentleman will revolve twice in the air before alighting on his feet on the mattress — a feat that no other performer in this or any other country can accomplish. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Balchellor," and Mr. Batchellor, who is an excellent leaper, and shares the championship with Frank Gardner, formerly of Cole's show, but now with Barnum, makes the leap in a clever and comparatively easy manner.

This difficult feat, never executed, it is asserted, till within the past one hundred years, can now be witnessed at almost every first-class circus performance in this country — but not always for the same distance attained by Messrs. Batchellor and Gardner. Forty years ago the British performer who could throw a double somersault was looked on as a wonder. The

writer, some thirty-three years ago, saw Tomkinson, a famous British clown and acrobat, execute this feat in Franconi's circus, then stationed for the season at Edinburg, Scotland. It was the same Franconi who afterward managed the hippodrome in New York in 1863–4, and the company was booked as first-class in every respect. The double somersault was performed by Tomkinson at his benefit, and the announcement of the then great feat packed the wooden building to suffocation. When the ring-master had made the preliminary speech, and Tomkinson retired up the steep incline which termimated in the spring-board, every heart stood still. A quick, impetuous rush down the board, a bound high in the air, a slow revolution and the gymnast descended nearly to the ground. It seemed impossible to do it, but in the last six feet the curled up body turned once more, and Tomkinson alighted on the big, soft mattress on his feet, but staggering. He was prevented from falling by the ring-master, and as he turned to go inside, Franconi, the enthusiastic French manager, patted him warmly on the back, amid the applause of the vast audience. It was a rare feat in those days. Tomkinson and the few other British double somersault performers did it only at infrequent intervals.

In this country Costella, a noted circus leaper, made it more difficult by clearing a number of horses at the same time. But soon a number of acrobats were able to follow his example, and even excel him in height and distance. Nowadays a circus acrobat who cannot do a double somersault is not considered anything but an ordinary preformer unless he can do other sensational and original feats. Last year Barnum had a corps of acrobats, of whom seven preformed double somersaults every night during the season. John Rob-

inson has five men who can do it. The most surprising and unexcelled feat of double somersault throwing was that of the Garnella Brothers, who performed it in variety halls and circuses a few years ago. Standing on his brother's shoulders the younger Garnella sprang up and revolved twice, landing again on the shoulders. When it is considered that the double somersault by other performers is accomplished by a short spurt, a spring-board, and no restriction as to the spot of alighting, the feat of young Garnella must be classed among the unprecedented marvels of the acrobatic art.

The triple somersault is a dream of every young and ambitious acrobat. It requires phenominal dexterity of body, and is known to be so dangerous that few have even attempted it. Fame and fortune awaits any performer who can do it, say twenty times in one tenting season. Were it not that circus managers know that the feat, or even the attempt, if repeated a limited number of times, will certainly result in a broken neck, they could well afford to pay the performer $10,000 to $20,000 for a season; and were it not, too, a proven fact, it would seem that the laws of gravitation and the limitations of physical dexterity forbade the turning of a triple somersault except by accident. In turning a double somersault off a springboard, it is necessary to make a leap at an angle of about thirty degrees to obtain the necessary "ballast" or impetus to turn twice. If an almost perpendicular leap is made, the leaper would not have leverage enough to turn. In order to make the double somersault the performer has to leap from the springboard with all his might to get the proper angle as well as to attain a sufficient height, so that he may have time to turn twice over before alighting. The same conditions govern the triple somersault, only it is necessary to go about one-third higher into the air.

An American named Turner accomplished a triple somersault once in this country and again in England. He tried it a third time and broke his neck. It is claimed that with this exception and the exception of Bob Stickney, of John Robinson's show, and Sam Reinhardt, an ex-leaper, no acrobat has been successful. The skeptic may say triple somersaults may be accomplished by the aid of higher and more powerful springboards than those in use, but that would merely change the angle, and the result would be the same. Of course the board could be placed high enough, but the specific gravity of the performer's body would be increased while descending. The height is not the only trouble. If it was only height, such men as Stickney, Batchellor, Gardner and one or two others, by improved appliances and practice would overcome that difficulty. But after the double somersault is accomplished and the performer is ready to turn again, he "loses his catch" or the control of his body, and is governed in his descent by gravitation alone. His head being heavier than his feet, he is very apt to light on it first and break his neck.

The first recorded attempt to throw a triple somersault in this country was made by a performer in Van Amburgh's circus at Mobile, Alabama, in 1842. He broke his neck. Another attempt was made in London, England, in 1846. It was made in Astley's amphitheatre, then leased to Howe & Cushing, the American managers. In this company was M. J. Lipman, a fine vaulter, Levi J. North, now in Brooklyn, New York, a famous equestrian; the late William O. Dale, a native of Cincinnati, who died here, blind and broken down, and who was an acrobat and equestrian of great reputation, and Wm. J. Hobbes, a fine leaper. It was previously announced that Hobbes would attempt

a triple somersault, and the house was jammed. He tried it, and was instantly killed. The next to try it was John Amor, who was born under the roof of Dan Rice's father's domicile, near Girard, Pennsylvania. Amor travelled for years in this country with Dan Rice's circus, and in that day was considered the greatest gymnast in America, if not in the world. He is said to be the first performer in America to turn a double somersault over four horses. In 1859 he went to England and travelled with a circus all through the united kingdom. In the same year he attempted to turn a triple somersault at the Isle of Wight, but landed on his forehead and broke his neck.

Billy Dutton, it is said, performed the great feat while a member of Lake's circus, at Elkhorn, Illinois, in 1860, at a rehearsal, in the presence of John Lawton, the famous clown, now with Robinson's circus. Dutton was ambitious to have it to say he did it, and did not make the attempt with the intention of repeating it. He made the leap from a high spring-board. Dutton said then he would not try it again, and that his lighting upon his feet was an accident, as he could not control his body after turning the second time. Frank Starks, who was well known in Cincinnati, undertook the feat at the fair grounds in Indianapolis in 1870, for a wager of $100. In the first attempt he turned three times, but alighted in a sitting posture. Every one was satisfied with the result, and the money was tendered him. He proudly refused it, saying he would repeat it, and light upon his feet before he felt sufficiently justified in taking the $100. He did repeat it, but struck on his head, dislocating his neck, and death resulted a few hours afterward. Bob Stickney accomplished the great feat when fourteen years of age, while practising in a gymnasium on Fourteenth

Street, New York. William Stein, an attache of Robinson's circus, was one of the persons who held the blanket for him to alight upon. Stickney says he believes he could do it again, but would not attempt it for less than $10,000, being fully convinced that the chances for his final exit from the arena would be good on that occasion. Sam Reinhardt, a former leaper, now a saloon-keeper at Columbus, when with the Cooper & Bailey Circus at Toledo, in 1860, not being satisfied with turning double somersaults, tried to add another revolution. He turned twice and a half, alighting on the broad of his back, and was disabled for a short period. The fact that a triple somersault was ever accomplished before a circus audience, after due announcement, and under the same conditions as double somersaults are performed — namely, landing on a mattress — may be seriously doubted. The best informed circus men say that it cannot be done with anything even like comparative safety except in the sheets, a blanket held by a number of men being used to catch the alighting performer. It is claimed, also, that it has never beeen accomplished except in that way.

BICYCLE RIDING EXTRAORDINARY.

CHAPTER XLIII.

AN ADVENTURE WITH GIANTS.

I was in the office of the old *Evening Post*, at St. Louis one afternoon in 1879, when it was invaded by Capt. M. V. Bates and wife, the tallest married couple in the world. They were travelling with Cole's circus, and by invitation of the managing editor, who wanted them interviewed, they visited the newspaper office. A very small reporter had been assigned to do the talking, and he waited patiently around the establishment until a carriage drove up to the door and a shout went up, "Here they come," at the sound of which the interviewer hurriedly made for the waste-basket which was under the table. Whether the giant and giantess saw the diminutive reporter or not they kept on coming in, and the scribe saw no other way out of it than to dive into the ample recesses of the basket, and nestle upon a bed of school-girl poetry, statesmen's essays, and applications from last year's and the coming year's college graduates, for managing editorship. There is a barbaric sesquepedalianism (which is a good long word to ring into a chapter about six-storied people) and a prevailing atmosphere of suffocation in such a waste-basket; nevertheless, the tiny reporter crouched closer as the Brobdignaggian people approached with a rabble that noised their heels upon the floor, their tongues against the roofs of their mouths, and that made things look and sound as if all the quarreling powers of Europe had set their com-

bined forces down in the *Evening Post* office for the special purpose of driving the senses of its whole staff out through the top of the building. But all this was seraphic bliss compared with the awful moment when the giant captain deliberately sat down on the table just over the waste-basket. It would take a million horse-power jackscrew, I should think, to raise the fallen hopes of the reporter just then. A man stands some chance if a custom-house falls on him hurriedly, but chance crushed to earth never rises again, when a giant like this is threatening to make any easy-chair out of him. I suppose nearly everybody has heard the funny story about the fat woman and the living skeleton, in a New York museum, who fell in love with each other. They got along very nicely for a while, and were as affectionate as if the two had pooled their issues of flesh, blood, and bone, and divided up so that each tipped the scale at two hundred and sixty pounds, instead of the whale-like spouse tipping the scale at four hundred and ninety, while the skeleton husband did not need any more than a thirty-pound section of the beam to balance his weight. They were as happy as the sweetest of the singing birds until one day the husband allowed his heart to stray off to the Circassian girl, who had been orginally born in Ireland, but had her hair curled for a short side-show engagement. Mr. Skeleton was making the weightiest kind of love to the fair Circassian for probably a month before the fat woman was made aware of the fact. Then the monster that is usually represented as green-eyed, took possession of her. She kept a careful vigil of all "Skin-and-bones'" doings, as she called him, until one day she found him during the noon hour, with his lean arms around the Circassian girl's neck, and his thin lips glued to her pouting labials of cherry-red. It is im-

possible to describe the terrible manner in which she swooped down upon Mr. Skeleton. It was enough to say that she covered space with alarming rapidity, and taking her thirty-pound husband by the back of the neck, shook an Irish jig out of his rattling bones, after which she threw him on the floor and deliberately sat upon him. The vivacious showman who told this story said a mill-stone could not have made a nicer sheet of wall-paper out of the living skeleton, had one fallen on him, and only for the buttons on his vest he could have been pushed through the crack under the door, after the fat woman got through with him. But to come back to Capt. Bates, the table upon which he had seated himself groaned, and the little reporter moaned. The fleeting seconds were magnified into centuries, and the man in the waste-basket afterwards told me that he felt himself shrinking into something like a homœopathic pill. The table, however, appeared to stand the pressure a great deal better than the person under it, and it was sometime before the latter came to reconcile himself to the safety of his situation. When he did so he peeped out.

The sight that met his gaze was a curious one. There was the great towering giantess, of pleasing features and with nothing of a "fee-fo-fum" air about her, quietly seated in the editor's chair, taking in the situation as if she had been accustomed to the thing since Adam's father was bald-headed. And there were the editors and news-hunters gazing on admiringly, with one or two of them particularly awe-stricken and wild-eyed. But the background was the thing. It was a circus in itself. At the doors and windows, upon tables and chairs, and perched further up on the top of an inoffensive and weak partition, as high as the giant himself, was a ghastly array of gaping mouths and

bursting eyes in a setting of eager and dirty faces, — inside and out, high and low, anywhere and everywhere around the institution within seeing distance were newsboys and boot-blacks till one couldn't rest; with a dim and distant horizon of more respectable visitors who had been tempted in by the unusual scene and noise. After the usual courtesies had been interchanged, the editor remarked: —

"I had a young fellow assigned to interview you, Captain, but I don't know where he is just now."

"Perhaps he's gone to git an extension ladder," suggested a forward newsboy.

"No, Skinny," said another; "he told me he was going to get old Stout's balloon."

At this moment there was a commotion under the table. The giant's foot had swung back and collided with the waste-basket. To say it was a big foot would be like calling the pyramid of Cheops a brick-bat or the Colossus of Rhodes an Italian plaster-cast. They say Chicago girls have big feet; I don't know this to be a fact, but if they have anything like the pedal spread of Captain Bates they are entitled to the credit generally given them of greatness in this way. At any rate the collision between the foot and the basket caused the recondite reporter to disclose his whereabouts. The managing editor qualified his conduct as unbecoming a newspaper-man, and the giant himself gently requested the scribe to come forward.

"You won't make a watch-charm out of me?" queried the reporter, apprehensively.

"No, no," the giant answered, in an assuring tone.

"Nor a scarf-pin?"

The giant said he wouldn't.

This allayed the reporter's fears, and he came forward from the atmosphere of "respectfully declined"

literature in which he had been. Capt. Bates's greeting was most kind, and so was that of his wife. The reporter saw at once there had been no necessity for his previous timidity, and managing to get within a couple of yards of the giant's ear, he excused his awkward and silly actions. A pleasant chat followed, in which the giant and giantess gave brief outlines of their personal history.

Capt. Bates is now (1879) thirty-five years of age, stands seven feet eleven and one-half inches in height, and weighs about four hundred and eighty pounds. He is well put together, handsome in features, genial in speech, and has the reputation of being a sharp, shrewd man of the world. Mrs. Bates is thirty-two years old, of the same height as her husband, although she really seems to be taller, and turns the scales at about four hundred and twenty pounds. She is thinner in form, but of excellent physique, is handsome, and has the same frank and smiling expression on her face as that constantly worn by her husband. She says she likes the show business, because it brings her in contact with so many persons. The Captain, though, having been in it about twelve years, and accumulated considerable means, does not care much about parading his colossal proportions before the public. It has been his desire of late years to live in private, quietly on his farm in Ohio, where the couple have a house built expressly for them, with doors, windows, furniture, etc., on a giant scale; but until this year they received so many handsome offers that they forsook the sod for the sawdust, and the plow for the platform. In 1880, I think it was, a giant child was born to this enormous couple. The infant weighed twenty-eight pounds at birth.

After listening patiently to the Captain and his wife

as they spoke of themselves, the little reporter whom I have introduced the reader to already, suggested as he nearly dislocated his neck in looking up at the lofty couple, that it would have been a nice thing to be around when they were making love to each other, but Mrs. Bates said that was rather a delicate matter to call up, and the reporter subsided. I could not help thinking, however, that a fellow must feel awful queer with four hundred and odd pounds of sweetheart upon his knee. Himalayan hugging going on all the time, and love-sighs that needed a Jacob's ladder to come from the heart-depths playing above his head like mountain zephyrs around the Pike's Peak signal service station. And then when a fellow felt his love away down in his boots, what an Atlantic cable job it must have been to find out exactly where it was! And the old garden gate, how it must have been like the gates that brave Samson shouldered with probably a little extra bracing to it. And what chewing-gum swopping must have gone on, and ice cream eating, perhaps a plate as large as a Northland *jokel* at a time, and no two spoons in it, either? Oh, but it must have been a heavenly thing!

"You weren't afraid of her big brother, Captain, were you?" friendly interrogated the reporter.

"Oh, no; not at all," answered the Captain.

"If you sat down on him once you could have sold him for a bundle of tissue paper, couldn't you?"

"That is not it, my boy," said the Captain. "She didn't have any big brother."

"Oh, yes, I see."

Then the discourse turned into other channels, intended to be of special interest to *splacmucks* — as the Brobdignaggians called ordinary mortals — who are contemplating marriage with giantesses.

"I suppose Mrs. Bates does not wield an ordinary rolling-pin?" the reporter half queried, addressing himself to Capt. Bates.

"No, indeed," the lady herself replied, laughingly. "I have one made expressly for my own use, from one of the largest of the Yosemite Valley trees."

"And you lay it on the old man now and then?" the reporter asked.

"I can answer for that," put in the Captain. "She sometimes brings it down so heavily on the rear elevation of my skull that it feels as if I had run against a pile-driver on a drunk or lost my way under the hammers of a quartz mill."

Mrs. Bates certainly had the physical strength to make a rolling-pin dance a lively jig in any direction, and if the weapon is anything at all like what it is here represented to be, Thor's celebrated hammer will have to go to the hospital as a weak and debilitated concern until the giants lay their domestic difficulties aside and retire permanently from active service.

"It must be a gigantic thing when the Captain comes home late at night, from the lodge, you know, falls through the kitchen window into a pan of dishes, and after stumbling up stairs goes to bed with his boots on?" the reporter insinuated, as he looked sorrowfully at the giantess.

"Oh, he never does that," said the lady; and after a minute she added, "and he'd better not."

The giantess looked knowingly at the giant who looked down at the floor. My thoughts wreathed themselves fondly around the Yosemite-tree rolling-pin, and I guess Capt. Bates's thoughts were turned in the same direction.

"Nobody ever dares to write *billet-doux* to Mrs. Bates," said the reporter. "I suppose you know

circus and theatrical people are subject to that sort of thing."

"Not any body that I know of," the Captain answered.

"And I suppose if anybodydid they wouldn't care about having you know it, either? said the little *Evening Post* man.

The Captain made no reply, but a mysterious kind of look crowded into his eyes, and if anybody around the newspaper office had dared to entertain a spark of affection for the giantess he could see at once that he didn't stand the ghost of a show while the giant was around.

"Now, Captain," the tiny and timid reporter remarked, moving to a distance, "I know you like travelling, and I have one more question I would like to ask you. It is about hotel accommodations. Don't you occasionally have to hang your head or feet

GIANTESS.

over the ends of of the beds you encounter?"

This question disgusted the Captain and he rose from the table indignantly, as did Mrs. Bates from the editorial chair, and doubling themselves up as they reached the doorway they majestically swept out of the newspaper office, and stepping into their carriage were driven away.

GIANT.

Another notable giant is Colonel Routh Goshan, who was born in the city of Jerusalem, on the 5th day of May, '37, of Arabian parents. He is the youngest of a family of 15 children, who like himself, father and mother were all giants. He served with distinction in the Crimean war, and afterwards in the Mexican army.

Colonel Goshen stands 7 feet 11 inches in his stocking feet, and measures 75 inches around the chest, 25 inches around the arm, and wears a No. 11 shoe. His weight is 666 pounds.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE "TATTOOED TWINS."

WANTED—The address of some one who can tattoo with Indian ink on the person. A. J. H., No. ——, —— th Street.

This advertisement appeared in a St. Louis Sunday morning paper. The number and the street are not given for reasons that will at once present themselves to every intelligent reader. Now there is sometimes that in an advertisement which attracts one like a pretty girl. A few lines may furnish a neat little intellectual flirtation, and very frequently can, like a coy and pretty maiden, keep coaxing a fellow along until he is perfectly lost in the maze of an affection that he has neither the tact nor the willingness to try to escape from. As soon as my eyes lit upon them and the words from the capital W in the beginning to the period at the end were taken in, I was irrevocably gone on them. Like the immortal J. N., I immediately lifted the veil and looked at the suppositious sanctuary behind it, and then saw that walking art gallery, Capt. Costentenus—known to thousands of people who saw him travelling as the tatooed man — lying bound hand and foot upon the earth and surrounded by half a dozen Chinese Tartars, who were industriously pricking him with pointed instruments, which were ever and anon dipped into the little basins of blackish-blue liquid. The scene changed suddenly into a room at No. —— ——th Street, and the Tartars were metamorphosed into a single individual of a decidedly Caucasian aspect,

but with features wrought in that indistinctness which very frequently is characteristic of the shapes and forms seen in waking dreams, and the Greek Captain was replaced by an equally Caucasian subject, who was quietly undergoing the operations of having his breast tattooed in the most lavish and picturesque manner that the artist knew how. This idea fastened itself in my mind to such an extraordinary extent that merely for the purpose of gratifying a certain instinctive curiosity, as well as to see if my suppositions were correct, I called at the house indicated next afternoon.

It was a large three-story boarding-house in a very quiet part of the city, and situated romantically enough to lend the coloring of fact to the picture I had previously conjured up of the surroundings of the gentleman who wanted to be tattooed.

A young girl opened the door, who knew nothing of the person who owned the initials that appeared in the advertisement. I explained that this was the number and street — it was certainly the right house — and couldn't she recollect some name that began with an H. No, she could not. She did not think there was any gentleman boarding in the house whose name began with an H, and then she recollected that there had come to the house a few days before a man whose name she did not know. She would call her mother. "Ma! oh, ma!" rang down through the hallway, and around behind the staircase, and down into the dining-room, and up came the assuring response, "I'll be there in a minute." Enter the landlady with a wet towel on her head, and wiping her fingers on the corner of her apron. In answer to the daughter's query as to what the "new gentleman's" name was, she replied, as if she had known him since the corner-stone of Cheops was laid, that he was Mr. Henneberry.

Was he in? No, not just then, but he would be back in time for dinner, which would be spread in about half an hour. Somewhat disappointed I replied that I would take a walk around and call at the end of the half hour, and was about to leave the door when a voice was heard on the upper landing, and the words "Hold on!" shouted in a very peremptory manner brought me to a halt. It was Mr. Henneberry, as I soon ascertained, when a tall, stout, well-proportioned gentleman, of handsome features and the prettiest black hair my eyes ever gazed upon, came down, introduced himself, and invited me in. The object of the visit was explained in a few words.

"Well," said Mr. Henneberry, "I've been just talking to a gentleman up in my room, an old sailor, who was crippled some years ago, by falling from the spar of a South American sailer, so he says, and who appears to be pretty expert. I rather like the man, and I think he will about suit me. He needs money, what you don't appear to do, and I think he is just the very man for what I want. So you see, I think you're a little late."

I expressed my regret at not having seen the advertisement earlier.

"You see," continued Mr. Henneberry, "I want somebody who will stay in the house here, and be available at all times during the day. It's a pretty long job—" and here he checked himself. "No, I don't mean a long job, because there ain't much of it, but what there is has got to be done neat and right up to the handle. What sort of work can you do?"

I bared my arm and exhibited a large death-head and cross-bones, an American eagle, and a bust of George Washington, which I had tattooed into me, when young and fond and foolish, by a Greek sailor I met in Milwaukee.

"That's pretty good," said Henneberry. "Where did you learn the business — if I might call it a business?"

Here I explained that an old sail-maker had taught me the art and that, having acquired the modus operandi of pricking the color into the flesh, I was perfectly at home in the business, as I was also an experienced sketcher.

Further talk followed, in which Mr. Henneberry spoke of tattooing generally, but made no allusion to the person to be tattooed nor the extent of the work to be done. At last, as he rose from his chair, as a gentle reminder that he had said about all he wanted to say, remarked that I might call again, as he had yet made no definite arrangement with the man up-stairs and probably would need two.

I went off chagrined, and wished that the old salt with the broken leg, who had gotten in ahead of me had broken his neck when he fell from the spar of that South American sailer. I left the door whistling, "We Parted by the River Side."

A saunter into a shady spot at a safe distance from the house, and a mind made up to await the outcoming of the successful rival, were the results of a sudden inspiration. An hour passed, a half more, three quarters, and it was just about an even couple of hours when out from the door of No. —, —th Street, limped a middle-aged, bent man, and he came directly towards me. He passed me by, for about half a block, when I caught up, and introduced the opening wedge of conversation by remarking that the weather was a little cooler than folks around there had been used to for the past month or so.

"Well, yes," was the reply, "but I don't mind it so much. You see I've hove to in hotter ports than this'll ever be. That sunstroke period was Injun

summer compared with the brimstun climate I've pulled through. I've been along the African coast when it was hot enough to make a mill-stun sweat. If they could have just shipped that weather North it would thaw the North Pole into hot water inside of fifteen minutes."

And then the crippled sailor told of other experiences in other warm climates, and we talked on in an easy, friendly way for three or four blocks, when my companion remarked that he was going to take the cars. I said I was going to do the same, and as soon as we were seated on the shady side of the conveyance I remarked in a careless, off-hand way: —

"You got ahead of me in that job down at Henneberry's, old man."

He opened his eyes, looked at me half suspiciously, and said: "Then you're the young man the gentleman was talking about to me. You went to see him, this afternoon?"

An affirmative was the answer.

"Well, you needn't be so put out. He ain't engaged nobody yet. At least he ain't closed with me. You see, he's a bit scary. Didn't he tell you what he wanted?"

"Yes. At least, he left me to infer that he wanted either himself or somebody else tattooed."

"All over?"

"I thought that was what he meant."

"Well, blast his jib! He made me make all sorts o' promises not to open my port-hole about it."

"It is a very funny project, isn't it?" asked the reporter.

"Oh, no, not at all. I've been at it afore. I worked at a man up in Canada for about three months and got him nigh half done, when he died."

"It's a pretty dangerous operation, this tattooing?" was the next gentle insinuation.

"Yes, sometimes. But Henneberry can stand it. He looks as if he had the constitution and he appears to be reckless of the consequences. He wants to be a show-fellow. He's struck on it, just the same as that Canada chap who kicked. He's got an idea that there's money in it, and he's always talkin' about that Grecian chap as is with the circuses, you know."

"How long will it take to do the job?"

"Well, that I don't exactly know. He talks of havin' two of us at it. Maybe you're the other fellow, and he's in a stormy hurry about havin' it finished up, and wants a fellow to stay in the house with him all the time so that he can take his tattooing just when he feels like it. Are you good in drawin' dragoons, flyin' fish, elephants, boey constrictors and sich, young man?"

I replied that I was an adept in delineating animals of the sort named.

"Then I guess he'll want you. I used to be a pretty good drawer myself afore I fell from that South American, but my hand shakes no little now; but you just lay the lines, and if I don't stick 'em in as clean as a copper plate, my name ain't Jack Hogan."

"What will he pay for the job?"

"Well, I asked $600 calc'latin' six months would do it, but he brought me down to $450 and will pay my board and lodgin'. That ain't bad."

The reporter coincided with Jack Hogan that it appeared to be a pretty good thing.

"And you don't git your money down either. He wants to be fixed up from the soles of his feet to near his shirt collar and wristbands, in the house where he is now, and then he's goin' off to some quiet spot and

have his face and hands and even his ears and the top of his head, for he's partly bald, done up in some place in the country, or may be out in some of the Pacific islands, and if it's a bargain between us I'll have to go with him."

"What catches me," said I, as we got up to leave the car, "is what Henneberry will do with himself when the finishing touches are all put on him."

"I can't say, but I s'pose he'll go off to the Sandwich Islands, marry a nigger squaw, or something of that sort, and come back with a cock-and-bull story about being captured by savages, and then swing 'round the circle with some circus or other. He's got the money to push the thing through, and I believe he can stand it. Maybe he'll travel with old Cos'tenus, and they'll call themselves the tattooed twins."

And the old fellow laughed heartily as he got down carefully from the platform of the car, and limped away towards the river — perhaps down to the Bethel Home on the levee.

The foregoing story may be regarded as quite a valuable clue when associated with a piece of information furnished by an Albany, New York, journal, whose reporter says the work on Capt. Costentenus's body pales when compared with that shown by a young man who stopped over in Albany one evening last summer on his way from Saratoga to his home in Syracuse. His name is Henry Frumell, and he is but twenty-three years of age. Although so young, he has, according to his own story, seen considerable of life. In 1876 he ran away from home, shipped on a merchant vessel which was trading among the Washington Islands in South Pacific. While there he underwent the tattooing process, which he described as the most painful torture ever endured.

"How was it done, and by whom?" he was asked by a reporter.

"By the natives, and with six needles fastened to a stick. Do you see them (showing the backs of his hands and wrists)? There is a lady's face on one and a man's on the other. Vermilion red and indigo blue were used, being pricked in with the needles. Now you see that the work is executed just as neatly and perfectly as it could possibly be on the human skin. Well, it took weeks before the design was finished, and it had to be pricked over a number of times."

"It must have been painful."

"It was. But then I had no choice but to submit."

"Why, were you compelled to undergo the tattooing?"

"Hardly that, but it was wiser to do so."

"How could natives execute the work so perfectly?"

"They used designs given them by a sailor named John Wells, who belonged to an English vessel. Those on my wrist are not so perfect as on other portions of my body."

"Did they tattoo you all over?"

"All except a small portion of the left leg above the ankle."

The designs so ineffaceably worked into Frumell's skin are numerous and beautiful, and some of them so appropriate to the young man's nationality that it is difficult to imagine how a South Pacific savage, even with an English sailor for an advisor, should have selected such fitting pictures. On his back, extending from shoulder to shoulder, and from the nape of the neck downward was a spirited illustration of two ships in action. Below it is a snake with protruding fangs

and a scroll with Paul Jones's motto, "Don't tread on me." On his breast is the national coat of arms worked on the breast of an American eagle with pinions outspread, and the national colors in its beak. This covers the entire breast from armpit to armpit, and from the throat downward. Both arms are literally covered with designs of beasts, birds, and flowers. The lower limbs are also ornamented, one with the "Crucifixion of Christ" and the other with the shamrock, harp of Erin, and other designs. Each kneecap looks like a full-blown rose, with its vivid coloring and almost perfect imitation of that flower. The remainder of his body is similarly decorated, over five months being occupied in the process, and considerable more time being occupied in healing. His skin has the feeling of the finest velvet, and he says that he does not experience any evil effects from the immense quantity of poisonous dye injected into the cuticle. He has tried to eradicate the designs on his hands by burning, but without avail.

CHAPTER XLV.

IN THE MENAGERIE.

Before entering the menagerie let us look at the huge cannon standing here outside the dressing-tent. It looks like a ponderous affair, but investigation shows that it is made of wood. There is a latitudinal slit at the lower end and a lever. It requires an effort to push the lever back which indicates that there is a pretty strong spring in the bottom of the cannon. This is the piece of ordnance that Zazel is shot out of into a net some distance away. She lies on her back in the cannon, which is tilted to an angle of about forty-five degrees, assumes a rigid position, and at the word fire the lever is pulled back, the spring released, a pistol is fired, and while Zazel is coming through the air a little cloud of smoke rolls from the cannon's mouth and is swept away almost before she lands on her back in the net. Sig. Farini says Zazel is his daughter. Barnum says that when he was in London where Zazel was doing the cannon act, creating a great furore, the pretty little French girl came to him crying and asked to be taken away. She was only getting about six dollars a week for the perilous work she was doing and Farini was drawing a large salary out of which she got this pittance.

Sig. Farini also owns the Zulus that have appeared here. As their manager he is well paid for them, and as the Zulus sleep in the menagerie tent and have but few wants and he gives them about a dollar a day —

so Barnum says — Cetawayo's subjects are a profitable investment for him. Zulu Charley on exhibition in New York gets the magnificent sum of one dollar a day for doing his native war-dance and standing fire under the numerous eyes that are leveled at him daily. There is a bit of romance about this black warrior. Among the crowds who thronged to see the antics of the Zulus at Bunnell's Dime Museum, New York City, last winter, was an Italian girl named Anita G. Corsini, eighteen years old, a music teacher by occupation, and the daughter of a Mr. Corsini who is in business in New York. Zulu Charley won her admiration and love, and she spent many quarters from her hard-earned savings to see the dusky object of her affections. Charlie did not repel her affections and they swore to be true to each other. Mr. Corsini, however, did not regard with favor the prospect of a marriage between his daughter and a negro, and did everything in his power to dissuade her from carrying out her intention. Last week, however, the couple eloped, but while on their way to a minister's house they were arrested at the instance of Anita's father.

When the case came up on the following morning in the Jefferson Market court the father wanted to have the girl sent to Blackwell's Island, but upon her promise to obey him and leave the Zulu he changed his mind and took her home. But she again met Charley and, accompanied by another Zulu named Usikali, and Charles Richards, a white man, they went to the residence of the Rev. R. O. Page, Brooklyn, and asked to be married. The minister consented, but he seems to have made a mistake, addressing all the questions to Usikali instead of to Charley, and then pronounced them man and wife. On learning his mistake, however, he performed another

ceremony between the right parties. The newly married couple then went to the museum, where the bridegroom took part in the usual Zulu war-dance.

The tattooed Greek Costentenus with his picture-covered flesh is always an object of admiration to the ladies. He says he was tattooed into his present shape by Chinese Tartars and tells a harrowing story of his sufferings.

The torturing doesn't seem to have impaired his health or bothered his appetite any. He is a magnificent looking man physically and in his unstripped condition is a figure that the eye of an artist would delight to dwell upon. His only rival is a lady who is now on exhibition in England and whose breast and upper and lower limbs are covered with tattooing. I do not know her history, but she probably submitted to the process to make money out of it. Dr. Lacassagne, a French physician, has published a book on the habit of tattooing as practised in the French army. There are professional tattooers in Paris and Lyons who charge half a franc for each design. Generally the tattooer has cartoons on paper and reproduces these on the skin by a mechanical process. Large designs cost a good deal; a big representation of an Indian holding up the flag of the United States costs the decorated person fifteen francs. China ink is the coloring substance preferred, touched up with vermilion. Dr. Lacassagne has collected one thousand three hundred and thirty-three designs, tattooed on three hundred and seventy-eight members of the Second African Battalion or on men under arrest in military prisons. Many were tattooed on every part of the body except the inner side of the thighs. Patriotic and religious designs and inscriptions amounted to ninety-one. There were two hun-

dred and eighty amorous and erotic devices and three hundred and forty-four works of pure fantasy, such as ladies driving in a carriage, the horses plunging and servants rushing to their heads. The great efforts of art are reserved for the surfaces of the breast and back. The subjects of many of the drawings are best left undescribed, the imagination of a dissipated soldier being quite savage in its purity. Among patriotic and religious emblems are cited two devils, nine theological virtues, six crucifixes, two sisters of charity, three heads of Prussians, not flattered, and five portraits of ideal girls of Alsace, with no fewer than thirty-four busts of the republic. Among animals the lion and the serpent are the favorite totems. Among flowers the pansy is generally preferred. The æsthetic classes will be grieved to hear that not a single lily appears, and there was only one daisy. Among mythological subjects the sirens are the greatest favorites; next comes Bacchus with his pards, Venus, Apollo and Cupid.

Gen. Tom Thumb and his agreeable little wife are once more swinging around the sawdust circle with their old friend Barnum. Gen. Thumb is the most successful dwarf the world has ever seen. He is rich and as happy as if he and his wife were as tall as Captain and Mrs. Bates, the giant and giantess whose immense forms loom up above the crowds that throng the menagerie tent. I have written elsewhere about captain and his wife.

"Tummy T'um is ze worst bluff at pokair I ever saw," said Campanini one day, in a confidential mood; "I ride wiz heem in sefenty-seex from Pittsburg to Veeling, and he loose me elefen dollars on a pair of deuces. Ze Generale is a bad man at ze national game."

Campanini, it is well known, is exceedingly economical, and the loss of eleven dollars he gulped down as well as he could, sinking it away below the region of his lower register. It was a misfortune he will never be able to forget entirely, but General Thomas Thumb is a perfect basilisk to the distinguished tenor. Whenever their shows exhibit in the same town the singer looks up the dwarf and challenges him to a game of chance. They last met in St. Louis, a short time before Campanini's departure for Europe, and oddly enough they settled on a game of billiards, although probably for prudential reasons on Campanini's part, as it was impossible for Tom Thumb to win such a disastrous sum as eleven dollars from the Italian at that manly game.

The game took place in the principal billiard-room of St. Louis, and it was rendered doubly interesting by the fact that Charles Mapleson, faultlessly attired, kept the talley. A great crowd was soon attracted into the room, and the only regret of the two distinguished players was that they had not charged a general admission, reserved seats extra.

As the game proceded Campanini grew excited, and the sonorous notes of his full, rich voice resounded through the corridors of the great hotel. This, in turn, irritated the General, and his weak, piping tones, with a tinge of anger in them, contrasted strangely with the Italian's. The crowd laughed, and Campanini unconsciously exhibited some of the richest treasures of his stock-in-trade, while the General grew desperate and absolutely tried to reach across the table.

"Fefteen," shouted Campanini.

Failing in his first effort, the General again tried to accomplish the impossible.

"Fefteen," Campanini shouted once more.

Just then Charles stepped forward and offered to lift up little Hop-o' My Thumb.

"Who is playing this game, anyhow?" the General fiercely demanded.

"Fefteen," again shouted Campanini.

"That makes three times the bloody Italian has said 'fefteen,'" Thumb remarked, regaining his lost temper, and then to Campanini's dismay he proceeded leisurely to win the game.

"Elefen dollars at pokair, twenty-five cents at billiards — elefen twenty-five," the tenor kept muttering during the rest of the day, and that night at the opera Col. Mapleson could not understand why Campanini was so hoarse.

The "Wild Ape of Borneo" seems to be quite an intelligent animal and displays first-rate taste in choosing his company. He has learned by experience that girls were made to be hugged and kissed. Through the bars of his cage he has seen many a rural lass's waist in the power of a plough-boy's arm, and watched their lips meet in a smack that more than discounted the old minstrel joke about the sound resembling the noise made by a cow pulling her hoof out of the mud. It was no wonder, then, that when the "wild ape" got out of his cage, while the circus was exhibiting down South, he forgot all his Borneo breeding, and made a rush for one of the prettiest girls under the flapping canvas. He got one arm around her neck and with the paw that was free caught her chignon and made a desperate effort to obtain a kiss. The girl's escort was at first terrified and felt like climbing one of the quarter-poles, all the females in the neighborhood shrieked, and the males began to dive under their seats. At last a gentleman rushed up with drawn re-

volver and fired a shot close to the ape's ear, whereupon he at once abandoned his osculatory efforts, and made his escape.

A curiosity that has been before the public for almost twenty years is the "two-headed woman,"

PERFORMING ELEPHANTS.

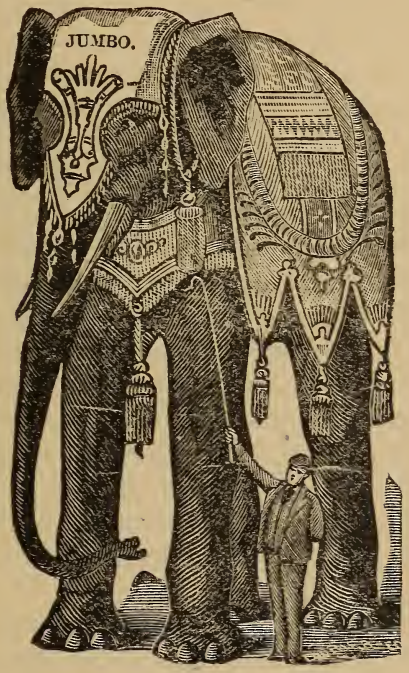
Millie Christine. The fact of the matter is that there are two women joined together below the waist, but as they have a single physical organization their manager has seen fit to call them one. This freak of nature is more astonishing than were the Siamese twins or the Hungarian sisters. The two-headed woman was born

of slave parents on the plantation of Alexander McCoy near the town of Whiteville, Columbus County, North Carolina, on July 11, 1851. Prior to this Millie Christine's mother had given birth to five boys and two girls, all of ordinary size and without deformity. The "two-headed woman" will be best understood by reading an extract from a lecture by Prof. Pancoast of the Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia. The Professor examined this curiosity and discussed upon the subject before a large gathering of medical men. In introducing Millie and Christine, he said he considered them the most interesting monstrosity of their class that has ever come under the notice of scientific men, far more interesting than the Siamese twins. In the midst of his discourse the young ladies entered, clad in green silk on their two bodies, pretty little bronze boots on their four feet, white kids on their four hands. They moved forward like an expanded V, with a crab-like movement that was not ungraceful. Born back-to-back, the Professor explained that the natural desire of each to walk face forward had twisted them in their present position. Separate entities, separate individualities, each can pursue separate lines of thought and conversation independent of the other. From habit their appetites call for food and drink at the same time. All the ills of flesh are not, however, necessarily theirs in common. One may have the toothache and the other be free from any ache. But in the examination conducted today the Professor discovered a remarkable development of sensibility since his previous examination, eight years ago. Touching them on any extreme of the body, on any foot, for example, both in common were conscious of the touch. Christine has been and is now the larger and stronger of the two. As children they used to

have little struggles and quarrels for supremacy, but, as they could not get away from each other, they early concluded that the best way to get along in their novel path through life was to yield to each other. Their present happiness and affection for each other is an example for couples who are yoked together in marital bonds. Sometimes Christine rolls over Millie in bed without awakening her. Both can sleep separately. They can stand and walk on their outside legs, but they prefer to walk on all fours. Millie cannot lift up Christine's legs, or Christine Millie's legs. Since the Hungarian sisters, there has been no similar case reported reaching adult life for one hundred and seventy years. The bond of union between these, which is just above the bones of the spine, is chiefly cartilaginous, but the spines are so closely approximated that there is an osseous union between them. To the question by Professor Pancoast, whether either was engaged to be married, each denied the soft impeachment with decision, though the Professor explained that physically there are no serious objections to the marriage of Her or Them; but morally there was a most decided one. During the Professor's lecture the Misses Christine Millie and Millie Christine appeared very much interested in the diagnosis of their singular condition and evidenced their superior intelligence by their apt and ready answers.

Turning from the human to the zoological branch of the exhibition, we find the usual assortment of animals from the monkey up to Jumbo, the elephant, who is only one of a dozen in the possession of his owner. All performing elephants are well trained, and there is scarcely one that cannot figure in the ring, responding to the good advice of the trainer, as the keepers often style themselves. The monkeys are always a source of

amusement, and never loose their drawing power. They are intelligent animals, but the inclination they have for mischief makes them quite dangerous. They tell a funny story about an actor out West who had a pet monkey that he carried with him wherever he



JUMBO.

went, even to the theatre. Jocko appeared to be perfectly harmless, and as he had been at the theatre night after night without making trouble, his master never dreamed that he would do anything out of the way. Imagine his surprise therefore when one night as he was in the midst of a comedy part down came

Jocko from the "flies" with a false face he had filched out of the property-room. His appearance brought down the house and the play was spoiled.

A traveller in Japan writing about the amusements there tells us of a very remarkable Sigmian specimen. He says: "There is an unpretentious show, costing one cent to witness, that is full of interest to those who have leanings toward Darwin's theory of the origin of mankind. It has a trained monkey of no mean attainments. The creature stands upright about three feet high, a well-developed and intellectual-looking monkey, which will go through all the posturing known to the famous India-rubber man, and some that that famous individual could not throw himself into, but the crowning feat that he has been taught is to dance the Japanese dance to perfection, taking the exact step, having the correct sway of the body, keeping time faultlessly, and using his arms and hands in exact accord with the movements of the feet. It is difficult to realize that a dumb brute can be educated as completely as this creature is. Oscar Wilde and this monkey would make a strong partnership in the platform business, for the monkey is certainly an æsthete —"a darling and a daisy."

If any reader wants to buy a menagerie he can obtain his curiosities from dealers in New York or Europe. He must have plenty of money though, as the prices of animals range high, as will be seen in the following figures: An elephant may be had for $16,000; lion and lioness with cage, $9,000; sea cow, $8,000; pair of large leopards and two smaller ditto, $5,000; Australian kangaroo, $2,000; Australian wombat, $12,000; ostrich, $1,000; royal tiger, $5,000; sacred camel, $2,000; rare birds, monkeys and lesser animals, in-

cluding those of American nativity, $20,000; total, $60,000.

Among the rarest animals, says a writer on this subject, are the hippopotamus and the gnu, or horned-horse. A first-class hippopotamus is worth five or six thousand dollars, an elephant from three to six thousand dollars, a giraffe is worth about three thousand dollars, a Bengal tiger or tigress will bring two thousand dollars, leopards vary from six to nine hundred dollars, a hyena is worth about five hundred dollars, while an ostrich rates at three hundred dollars. The price-list shows that, although expenses may be heavy, receipts are proportionately large, and that it does not require many large beasts to make a good business for one trader. A New York house in three years sold twenty lions, twelve elephants, six giraffes, four Bengal tigers, eight leopards, eight hyenas, twelve ostriches and two hippopotami, being a total business of about $112,000, or over $37,000 per annum, in the line of larger beasts alone, exclusive of the smaller show-beasts, such as monkeys, and exclusive also of birds, which latter items more than double the amount given. Gnus, or horned-horses, have come into great demand of late years, both from their oddity and rarity, and are valued at seventeen or eighteen hundred dollars apiece. An elephant is always in demand, and sells, whether it be male or female, large or small, "trick" or otherwise. Ostriches, though heavy eaters, are not very expensive, as they have cast-iron stomachs and digest stone, glass, iron, or almost anything else tha one chooses to give them, though they are judges of good meat when they get it. They are not the only creatures that eat glass. Heller or Houdin—I forget which of these magicians—found a taste among Oriental jugglers for pounded glass, which they ate in

large quantities. A trial by the Caucasian trickster developed the fact that glass was not only not injurious when taken in reasonable doses, but that it served as an appetizer, stimulating the stomach to hunger after food. There are two species of ostrich known to the trade, the black and the gray; both are very strong, fleet, and practically untamable. Lions, tigers and leopards form constituent attractions of almost all menageries, and are too familiar to need description. It may be here remembered, however, that people who deal with these creatures find that there is comparatively little danger to themselves to be dreaded from either lions or lionesses. These animals never attack any human being, save when excessively hungry; and when enraged, from any cause, always show such visible signs as put their keepers on their guard; whereas, the opposite of these statements is true in regard to tigers and leopards — the latter especially, which are regarded by those in the trade as the most dangerous, cruel and treacherous of all the beasts with which they are brought in contact. American lions or jaguars, and American or Brazilian tigers are very fierce, untamable and strong, although inferior in size to the lion or tiger proper. Of monkeys and baboons little more than has already been said need be repeated here. There are about one hundred and fifty different species of these creatures, the most intelligent of which is the ringtailed monkey, and the most stupid, that variety known as the lion monkey, from its being gifted, instead of brains, with a long mane. The variety of deer and antelope are numerous, and always find ready purchasers; the genuine antelope will bring two or three hundred dollars in the market.

A show of wild animals is one thing, and a very good thing sometimes; but the same number of wild

beasts when not in show — but merely in winter quarters or out and awaiting sale, presents a different, and, sometimes, a curious spectacle. Thus in a certain back yard in the city of New York, as singular a sight is presented to the lover of animal life as is afforded probably in the range of the whole world. You enter by a low doorway, and at first glance you see only a number of boxes, with iron bars in front — amateur cages in fact — and arranged alongside of each other, just as cases may be, without the slightest order or general arrangement. If you look a second time at these boxes you will be made aware of the fact that they are inhabited by certain moving animals; for pairs of bright eyes will gleam out upon you through the iron bars and occasional switching of some beastly tails against the sides of the cages will become audible, as will every now and then a deep smothered roar. Inspecting the box-cages or cage-boxes, more closely you will see, further, that one of them contains a three-year old lion, just getting his young moustache, or, what answers the same purpose to a lion — his mane. Next box to this you will find a lioness, about the same age as her mate, a fine specimen of African female, who seems very much attached to a dog that shares her cage with her in perfect harmony, at least so far as the lioness is concerned, for she does all she can to live at peace with the dog, yielding to his wishes in all particulars, giving up her meat whenever he takes a fancy to it, and getting out of his way whenever he wishes to walk about, although doggy does not seem to be a very amiable partner, and every now and then gives the lioness a bit of his mind by biting her in the ear. A little beyond this strange couple lie two more boxes — the upper one containing a pair of young hunting leopards, as playful as young kittens, which

spend their time in calling to the cats of the neighborhood, the lower one being the scene of the imprisonment of a full-grown, very handsome, very cross leopardess, who is always snarling and seeking whom or what she may devour. This latter beast has a special antipathy to a young lad who has charge of her, and tries half a dozen times a day to make mince-meat of him. On the opposite side are a number of boxes, containing monkeys of various species and baboons. One of these monkeys is a jovial female, christened Victoria, and is one of the most expert pickpockets in New York, which is saying a great deal. Vic can relieve a visitor of his watch and chain or pocket-book in a manner most refreshing to a monkey and moralist to witness, and although as ugly as sin is as quick as lightning. Next door to this kleptomaniac ape is a happy family of monkeys — father, mother and baby— who live together lively as clams at the turn of tide. On the ground, at a little distance, lies another box, which contains a monster baboon. This fellow is called Jonas, and is, without exception, the ugliest individual in existence to which the Almighty has ever given a shape — such as it is. These big apes are frequently palmed off on the public for gorillas; they are strong as giants, gentle as lambs, and can be taught tricks like dogs. As in the case of canines, severity and kindness are resorted to in training them. Prof. Harry Parker, in speaking to me about educating his dogs, said he rarely used the whip upon them, but endeavored, by properly feeding and speaking kind words to them, to make them obedient to his command, still the whip must be used. Dogs that hop around on two feet have their little limbs lashed from under them until they almost feel the sting of the rawhide in the tone of the trainer's voice. Clown dogs,

which have recently been prominent features of circuses and variety shows, are taught to go through every article that is put down upon the floor by their masters; that is why they squirm through a hoop, run under and overturn chairs, pass under bundles and upset the leaping basket that is used in dog circuses. Prof. Parker and Prof. Willis Cobb, I may here remark, are the best dog-trainers in the country, and both have large and fine collections of educated canines.

In the rear portion of the yard which we have been visiting is an inclosure, in which three or four horned horses or ponies, called gnus, are digesting their rations; next to these is a case in which is confined a fretful porcupine, who shows his bristles on the least provocation, and sometimes when there is no insult meant at all. The catalogue of cages or boxes is completed by that in which is held in duress a Brazilian tiger of the fiercest possible description, who does nothing but glare upon you and want to eat you. The meat-eaters in the collection are fed only once a day — at noon — and cost about a dollar per day to feed; the fruit-eaters, like the elephant, eat all the time, as fancy prompts; while the vegetarians, like the monkeys, take their three square meals a day. As a rule, all animals enjoy a better average of health than man, because they have no acquired tastes or dissipated habits. The elephant lives for centuries; the parrot is a centenarian, while the lion lives but twenty years or so. On the whole, the average life of man is greater than that of the majority of the so-called beasts, though their average of health exceeds his.

Wax-works, of one kind or other, enter into the display made in the menagerie tent; but the figures all seem broken or enfeebled by long usage, and instead of

being attractive, many of them are repulsive. How different from Madame Tussaud's exhibition — the prototype of all the efforts that have been made in the wax-work line! A correspondent who visited this display many years ago, when the display had a world-wide fame, wrote :—

"Madame Tussaud's famous exhibition of wax statuary and works in wax afforded me a very entertaining evening's occupation. Here are full-length portraits in wax of all the notables of the world; Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, the royal children, George III., Queen Charlotte, George IV., William IV., George II., Louis XIV., Emperor Louis Napoleon and his empress in their bridal costume, Henry VIII., Cardinal Wolsey, all the present sovereigns of Europe, Kossuth, Gen. Tom Thumb, etc., numbering nearly two hundred figures in all, so artistically arranged and so well executed that the effect upon the visitor on entering is the same as on coming into a grand drawing-room filled with noble ladies and gentlemen. So perfect is everything that you look to hear the figures speak, and can hardly convince yourself that they do not move.

"The second room of Madame Tussaud's exhibition is called the Robe Room, which contains the figure of George IV. wearing the order of the Garter. This robe was worn by his majesty in the procession to Westminster Abbey, at his coronation. To the right of this is the robe the same monarch wore at the opening of Parliament, and on the left the robe worn by the King in returning to Westminster Abbey after the coronation. The cost of these three robes was about $90,000. The third room of the exhibition is called the Golden Chamber, and contains relics of the Emperor Napoleon, among which is the camp bedstead used by Napoleon during his seven years at St. Helena,

with the mattress and pillow on which he died; the coronation robe of Napoleon and the robe of the Empress Josephine; the celebrated flag of Elba; the sword worn by the Emperor during his campaign in Egypt, and many other relics of him. In another room is the carriage in which Napoleon made the campaign of Russia, and which was captured on the evening of the battle of Waterloo; also the carriage he used at St. Helena, in which, of course, I sat down, according to custom.

"In another room are many relics of the French Revolution, among which are the instruments by which the unfortunate Louis XIV. was beheaded, as also Robespierre and others. These are but a few of the many curious and interesting objects to be seen at this exceedingly entertaining exhibition; and I passed several hours here, quite lost in the examination of the collection and the recollections which the various articles awakened.

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The menagerie, no matter how small or how extensive it may be, always has much within its cages and lying around under its canvas to interest young and old alike. It is like a volume of natural history that may be forever studied without exhausting the interest that attaches to it, and the knowledge contained in it. Thrown down after a single perusal, the book is picked up again and again, and each time its pictures and pages seem as fresh and entertaining as they were in the beginning. So, too, the collection of curiosities, that now-a-days form a very important part of every tent-show, never loses its attraction for the public. Gray-haired men who in boyhood looked, open-mouthed and astonished, into the den of lions, still find the same pleasure in contemplating these

wonderful beasts from a safe distance, and take delight in making their children acquainted with them. The tangled forests and matted jungles of new regions are constantly giving up new specimens of wild animal life; and with the old reliable attractions still plentiful, and startling novelties occasionally coming to the surface, there is every reason to believe that the menagerie will retain its present hold upon the hearts of the people, and last as long as there is canvas in the world to cover one or color enough to fill an ordinary stand of bills.

Now we have seen about all there is to see. Passing out and by the side-show blower with his fat woman and lean man, his glass blower and Irish Circassian girls, his juggler, and the heartless band of music he has playing at one end of his dirty tent; we move down the street, the sound of the side-show music dies out, the canvas fades behind the house-tops, and we have left the show world with all its sunshine and shadow, its laughter and tears.

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